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who died at Watertown, Massachusetts, in 1686. In the absence of such descendants, other persons are eligible to the scholarships. The will requires that this announcement shall be made in every book added to the Library under its provisions.



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1864.

Am. L.

HELPS TO  
**HEREFORD HISTORY,**  
CIVIL AND LEGENDARY;

IN AN ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT  
CORDWAINERS' COMPANY OF THE CITY;

(ACCOMPANIED WITH THE PROSPECTUS OF A SERIES OF  
VOLUMES ON TRADE HISTORY IN GENERAL.)

**THE MORDIFORD DRAGON;**

AND OTHER SUBJECTS.

*London*  
BY J. DACRES DEVLIN.

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"Lo! for ~~there~~ my mill  
Now grinds choice Apples!"  
PHILLIPS'S "CIDER."

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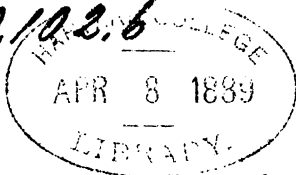
*London*  
LONDON:  
JOHN R. SMITH, 4, OLD COMPTON-STREET,  
SOHO SQUARE;  
EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

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MDCCCXLVIII.

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*Bright Land.*

Preparing, and intended to appear at the Close of the Year,  
of the same Size and Price as the present Volume, a

SECOND PORTION OF

"HELPS TO HEREFORD HISTORY," &c.:

Being a Review of the Ancient Localities of the City, and their  
Associations; with Notices of much of the Choice Scenery  
—Churches, and other Religious Edifices—Distinguished Resi-  
dences—and Historical Sites of the County generally.

*Received in Gent May Aug 1848 p 173-175.*

## TO SIR SAMUEL RUSH MEYBICK, KNT.

K.H., L.L.D., F.A.S., &c., &c.

IN pleasing remembrance of a visit paid by the Author, at his kindly invitation, on the First Day of the present year, and continued into the second, to his beautifully situated and intellectually stored mansion of Goodrich Court, near Ross ; but, more especially, as a small token of grateful acknowledgment for his services towards the general advancement of Knowledge, not only in his character as President of the Mechanics' Institute of Hereford, but for that laborious and most useful Series of Lectures (now drawing to a conclusion) which he has written for the Members on the History of their Country,—a series which it is to be hoped will, at no distant time, be yet far more extensively made known, when thrown into volumes, and thus to carry the benefits of the same genuine information and impartial statement of opinion into the Libraries of all other



similar Institutions throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire.

In these feelings, and for these reasons, the following Pages, the production of one who for a long number of years—and through various changes and trials—has still, in some way, endeavoured, as far as his means and opportunities would allow, to make manufacturing and mental employment consort usefully and harmoniously together; and, also, because the same pages have been mainly written under the roof of the Institute above mentioned, and on subjects wholly connected with the City and County of Hereford, are, with permission, most respectfully dedicated, by his

Very humble

And obedient

Servant,

JAMES DACRES DEVLIN.

Cathedral Close, March, 1848.

## PREFACE.

THE Title-Page of the present small Volume has been purposely drawn up so fully explanatory of its contents, that the Author needs only further to state, for the satisfaction of all inquisitive people like himself, that the condition of his health rendering it necessary,—combined with another equally pressing obligation,—that he should leave London (which has been his temporary home so often, and, in all so long), in the early part of the summer of 1847, and get away, for a time, into some less smokey and more field-environed city or town, he came to Hereford; and here, after securing some trifling share of work at his trade—which is that of a boot-closer—he recommenced, as a next proceeding, his old habit of seeking for such intellectual gratification as might be attainable within the new sphere where he was placed; and hence he began to peer about for such stray documents, books, or neglected bits of human history, as very few in his own humble walk in life seem to concern themselves so earnestly about as himself, and to turn to the same purposes.

Such, then, is nearly the whole of the short story belonging to this book; the introduction of the first part of the matter it contains to the attention of others, being in the shape of the following communication addressed to the Editor of the *Hereford Times*, and printed as addressed, and which is here repeated that the story may really be the whole:—

SIR,—In consequence of the stir occasioned by the late city no-election contest, the “remnants,” as our old writers would say, of the Ancient Trade Companies of Hereford, have been induced to show some signs of life. Certain of the members have met—certain of their time-shattered flags have been paraded through the streets—and certain delectables, of the

eating and drinking orders, have been pleasantly made to disappear at different congratulatory festivals.

In this place, I have no intention to moot a syllable of angry politics ; and hence shall only observe, by way of chronicle, that, somehow or other, the "Liberal Interest" (using this term in the present instance in its least offensive sense, as a mere mark of electioneering partizanship, in place of any higher or special approval of the particular party now bearing this name) had, if not all the *show* on its side, at least its far preponderating share of this post, paint, and canvass specializing. There was the flag of the "old joiners," as the person who carried it said to me, on my inquiry as to what trade it belonged ; the bakers' flag, the dyers', glovers', maltsters', and cordwainers' flags, and the two flags of the tailors,—“the nine-tenths” being thus, as it would seem, resolved to outdo all the *totals*, or whole men of the other fraternities ; and, assuredly, they flaunted their ensigns most manfully !

It was matter I felt of deep reflection, as I stood in various parts of the open positions which the streets of the town offered, to witness the sad remains of these, “the far-famed glories of other times !” But so it is.—So with the past, have vanished all the once jolly carcases of these processions of the “Crafts” and now was to be seen nothing but their most miserable-looking skeletons. Yet, withal, they had my respect. Old age is always venerable, and to be venerated ; and, perhaps, more than in any other way, the old age of the once great social institutions of many and many a century of years now departed, ought to be considered with this feeling. To myself, however, more especially, as one who has for a long period been making the former condition of the Trades an earnest and constant subject of research, with a view to something like a proper and popular history of the same, the whole of the spectacle referred to, struck upon my mind as one of the most important character. Being, then, so influenced, and so feeling, and as proof of how much of the *really valuable*, in matters of this kind, has hitherto been wholly neglected, I shall, with leave, in the next number of your journal, lay before its readers a few heads of such “material” as might be used in the production of a *TRADE HISTORY*, like the one contemplated. These I shall glean from several old documents I have just been favoured with a perusal and the use of, as belonging to the Hereford Cordwainers' Company ; while, should any similar ones still exist in connection with the other companies, the writer would alike feel obliged for their inspection. Perhaps, too, the like information may, in the change of circumstances, be in the possession of private individuals, as I have just found is the case with a retired tradesman,

of Eign-street, who now holds one of the old books of the Joiners' Company, and who, I feel grateful to say, has freely promised me its use for the purpose of extracting from it any such notices as I may please, in aid of the general design already made known.

Hoping, then, these few observations, as resulting from a portion of the late election display in Hereford, and in connection with the intention here, also, explained, may lead to some agreeable results, I shall now say no more, and next week forward some portion of the matter promised.

Yours, &c.,

August 12, 1847.

J. DACRES DEVLIN.

P.S.—May I add, that such information as is above solicited does not only apply to Hereford, but to any of the city and borough towns within the range of the circulation of this paper; and this large western side of our island is, fortunately, most pregnant with such—as Gloucester, Worcester, Tewkesbury, Monmouth, Brecon, Bristol, Ludlow, Shrewsbury, &c. I have already “gone a glean-  
ing,” in other years, in some other quarters; and now expect to get a few goodly handfuls in the abundance of the present glorious harvest of 1847, and while in this most abundant district.\*

I have now but to add, that to the voluntary kindness of Mr. Anthony, the proprietor and editor of the *Times*, the re-production of the main bulk of the present volume,—the greater portion of the writing having already appeared in this paper,—is solely owing; he offering the means of the adventure—and its benefit—should any be forthcoming.

In the printing of the volume, as will be observed, a two-fold pagination has been employed; the first division containing the matter about the Cordwainer's Company; while an account of the different pieces which make up the remainder, will be found at the back of the second title, where it follows the Prospectus which comes after the 76th page of the commencing portion of the book.

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\* Communications on such subjects as are here alluded to, will still very much oblige, and from any part of the United Kingdom, addressed for the writer, as stated in the Prospectus.

The PROSPECTUS here mentioned, has, also, been printed before, though not in the same form as at present, but in the advertising columns, on two or three occasions, during the April of 1847, of the London *Daily News*. The Proposal—or rather, the series of proposals—thus, then, again make known, belong, as it must be confessed, to a somewhat unusual order of endeavour for an individual who moves in the lowly position of the writer; but as it is not for the Napoleons alone of this earth to place their foot upon every Alpy altitude, so some bye-way may be found—to all hitherto unnoticed—by which the humblest Devotee of Knowledge may ascend the pinnacle of a sufficiently prominent and gratifying distinction; and then having so far accomplished his one great object, thereby, and thenceforth to cheer on, by his example, the progress of others, born to a similar destiny—subject to kindred aspirations—and struggling for a like upward triumph.

And why may not some such distinction be obtained even by chiefly dealing with the concerns of the lowliest men themselves, and as the first part of the present unimportant looking volume may be offered as a sort of distant specimen?

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ERRATA.—The first two sheets of the ensuing matter, having been thrown into pages and printed off without being seen by the writer, who was in Abergavenny at the time, some blemishes of the more formidable cast, have, in consequence, to be noticed. As, however, he has neither the inclination, nor the room, at this place, to attempt a complete rectification, he must only do so in two or three particulars. At p. 13, the sum stated to be paid by Richard Parker, should have been ix*s.* not *xs.*; and the total, as there, also, given, xxx*v.* viii*d.*, in place of xxx*s.* viii*d.* Queen Elizabeth, p. 29, line 5, is made a “*sister*-destroyer,” instead of a *cousin*-destroyer, in allusion to Mary, Queen of Scots; while, at p. 69, of the second portion of the volume, in the note from Sir S. R. Meyrick, the word “ark” has been printed *arle*, a mishap which is much to be regretted.

## THE ANCIENT CORDWAINERS' COMPANY OF HEREFORD.

By J. DACCBS DEVLIN.

No. 1.

### THE DINNER ; OR, THE SUBJECT INTRODUCED.

But a short time ago, and some nine or ten comfortable looking, though not very showy dressed, individuals sat down to enjoy themselves, as far as a good substantial dinner, and the not yet exhausted hilarity of their dispositions, might allow. They were all of sober age ; none of the party being under sixty, while several were making fast towards the winning of octogenarian honours—to the good round number of *four-score*—a word which is ever of weighty import in all earnest gossip concerning our aged friends.

And, reader, the humble scribe who is now in the act of ink scoring, and inter scoring again, the pure, white paper that now lies before him, and which scorings will not only soon lie before you but also, before hundreds of readers beside, after undergoing the all-aiding processes of the type-setter and the steam-printing machine—this very scribe was the invited guest of these, the above-mentioned veteran good fellows.

Dinner was on table early—much earlier than in the

general way of doing such things among the people of high life, for they were not "men of fashion" these; and, even on festival times, would not submit to put off their usual hour of obeying the appetite, for the sake of the richest laid out, or most exquisite, specimens of the culinary art.

And what more did they—this particularly select gathering of old friends—need, than the wholesome realities which were now placed before them? They had ordered, for the occasion, some of the best salmon of the Wye—of their own native, their own sparkling, rapid-running, wire-winding, and ever bountiful river; and, also, a necessary quantum of the fine, clear grained ox beef, that had been fed on the unctuous meadows that skirt the same river; nor did they forget to secure a due share of the well tasting mutton that had been lambed, reared, and fatted on those very hills tops that look down so glad-like on the same river and meadows; and they had with all this, the favourite pudding of the real Englishman—that which is made mainly of flour and plums, with other less noticeable condiments. Nor was the appearance of the brown-headed pie dish forgotten, though what the same hillock of provender contained I heard no one mention, nor yet had I, even to the very last, a peep beyond the crust; for who, after luxuriating their lips and teeth with the hot, racy plum pudding would venture upon iceing either lip or tooth on what might turn out to be but a cold mixture of stiff paste and apple?

The dinner finished, then came brandy, for there was no wine—wine being either too dear, or not *spiritual* enough for merry makers, who were already so far on their way to heaven; and now even seemed to be actually snatching a very palpable foretaste of the happiness expected.

In short, it was in all ways a most agreeable dinner this; and was also partaken of by a most agreeable party of hale old pals—pals, who had often enjoyed themselves in the same style; the good things provided being in general of the like character, and the talk which followed (for they could not be called conversations) bearing a similar impress to the talk “of yore.”

“There is nothing like leather” is a well-known adage; and here, truly, it was proved. As the party to which the reader has been thus introduced were, therefore, all men of leather, so, consequently, the truth of the just mentioned adage was most unmistakeably made known, for of leather, in some way or other, everybody had something to say—of leather “good, bad, and indifferent”—and of the wondrous workers in leather, the great men of the “last;” and, likewise, of the once wondrously glorious by-gone times, which the whole of these convivia had seen—times when, as journeymen, they could have saved “lashings” of money; and times, when, as masters, they would not, as a Scotchman might say, “boo” to any lord; when the “trade” had no Northampton, and the *slop*, or mere sale shoe shop, had not ventured to appear in their ancient capital, and there to cozen away some share of its own proper home employment.

Alas! but so it is! So changes come upon all—upon men of leather as well as men of learning; and nothing to the time-tried in either, seems as good as used to be.

But can this, in a strict sence, be proved? Can this *seeming* be shown to be a reality? In the case, then, of the small party under notice, let us try; let us, if we can, unveil something of “the past” of the particular calling of which these our cordwainers have so long been most praiseworthy members; and in this way, so far, feel that



we stand safely in our shoes—have a firm understanding of some few facts, however few these may be, and thus to arrive at a little certainty.

How, then, came these men to meet together, as described? and, also, to have met so often before? They met as a company—in their corporate, or incorporated, capacity, in a form, which, according to legal language, can never die; for ~~the~~ king succeeds to king, and thus the throne is never vacant, so the incorporated shoemaker, or tailor, glover, or even the butcher himself, who is so much amongst death, has a continual life in his company. The company always exists—the corporal, or *body* portion, is always what it has been; and so, however old it may grow, it is essentially the same. It is in this way then—by this sort of legal hocus-pocus—that a company or society—a company sanctioned by the laws, or “time-out-of-memory” usages, of a country—is a corporation; and a corporation never dies. Though all body, it is also all soul—a very miracle—unlike everything beside—of materiality. There is nothing, however, in regard to any such company so positive, that this eternity of being cannot be put aside. If it like, it may be so continued, or not; may run itself out with extravagance, or in despair, as with any other insane thing—if such insanity should come upon it—it can at once cut its own throat, and thus rush from existence as a *felo de se* or self-murderer. Also, in another way, a similar result may be produced. A corporation may be put out of the world by the tyranny of the greater might as the hard-handed government of Earl Grey dealt by the municipal corporations in the eventful onslaught of the Reform Bill, tearing them all up, root and branch, with the exception of London alone.

The babe, however, may be spared, where the parent is

destroyed ; and so, though the sturdier corporations were in this way nationally sacrificed, the little ones were not so openly and malevolently molested. It is true, that long before this, these same lesser eternities were, from time to time, much weakened and injured ; and now they were but allowed to nibble on—to still eat but such of the spare herbage as might be found to germinate on their old “common ground ;” and this was but spare indeed, for as no longer any manure was permitted to be spread over this ground, “short commons” has since followed most rapidly ; and thus, from sheer starvation, countless of these same humble corporations have perished—perished without notice, without lamentation, and even without the decent show of a funeral !

The men of leather, notwithstanding, have here in Hereford stood out wonderfully ; and although they may be even now dying, it would seem that they have resolved to die in a most life-like way—to die eating ! And a very sensible resolve it is ; and would make a much cheerier picture—if duly set out by the hand of a true artist—than that which the exquisite pen of Charles Lamb has drawn in his account of the “Melancholy of Tailors.”\*

All glory, then, be to ye, ye men of leather ! even in your “feeding” be glory ! As a “body,” here, in this small and quiet old city of Hereford, ye can prove an undoubted existence of nearly three hundred years ! and could no doubt go much further back, had ye the books of any

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\* See the “Essays on Elia,” an easily purchasable edition of which has been published by Moxon. These, and the various Essays of Leigh Hunt, issued by the same publisher, make a most delightful series of reading.

"register of births" to refer to, as is now, and will be the case for the future. But as these painstaking people were not known in the days of our youth, so all is lost—the long antecedents of those events, which it shall now be my pleasurable purpose to draw from their hiding nooks, and thus to display to the rising generation some samples of what, in reality, you have been in a portion of your manhood.

## No. II.

## THE DOCUMENTS—NAME—AND ORIGIN OF THE COMPANY.

I have already mentioned the late dinner set-out of this company. On that occasion (and I must here take some little credit to myself for the production of this result, as being mainly caused by some of my previous inquiries), a certain time-tinged parchment, and companion pair of books were exhibited. The books were both bound in the olden way, in vellum, but very plainly, without gilding or tool-mark, or even cover-clasps. One, in the thickness of its leaves, was much larger than the other—and this one was the older by far—bearing upon its early pages, statements going back to the reign of—if not the “good,” the bold “Queen Bess”—and upon its latest, others of the time of the Commonwealth. A good and goodly-looking hoary tissue of written record this mass of paper then contained. The other book was nothing to it, a mere modern (so to say) article, its first observable date being that of 1778, and but a very few notices in it; the better part of the leaves being all torn away—all the earlier, or written portions—and hence its comparative worthlessness.

To the bigger and better book, then, look we now; and yet, before we do so, it will be necessary to clear up one difficulty—a difficulty which will meet many at the very threshold of these papers, and, therefore, requiring to be made easy, or explained away to them. This is in the name of *cordwainer*, or *corviser*, as this latter form of the trade term was the one uniformly employed by the Here-

ford shoemaker. Why, it may be asked, was the shoemaker called by this name? or, is it a reality that the cordwainer was a maker of shoes? and if so, how came the strange-like appellation? for what reason, and at what time?

These questionings are natural; they cannot but arise from the subject; and hence, as far as one can, they will need to be cleared up in some way satisfactory. This explanation, then, I shall now attempt, in transcribing from *The Cordwainer's Companion*, a Trade Miscellany, published in London, at various intervals, during the years 1844 and 5—the following notice on the word cordwainer, as I then wrote it, in reply to similar inquiries:—

“In answer to several of our readers and correspondents, who at different times have written to us about the meaning of this word, as applied to the shoemaker, the most generally received account is, that it is of French derivation; the French *maker of the shoe* being still called a *cordonnier*, or as it is spelled in the old Dictionaries of this language, *cordouannier*, the workman, as it is said, getting this term from anciently using a particular kind of leather, which was first manufactured at Corduba, in Spain, at the time of the ascendancy of the Moors in that country; the *d* in Corduba being changed into *v*, which has been the case with this letter in many instances, and hence our own term of *Cordovan*, as still applied to a particular description of leather, though, doubtless, the leather to which we now give this name is of a very different character to that fabricated originally at Corduba, or, as it is at present called, Cordova. In most of our old Dictionaries, the word *cordwain* is defined to be a dry hide, and thus would come the accessory one of *cordwainer*, as a worker in or maker up of this sort of leather, dry, as we may suppose, contri-

distinguishing it from leather dressed in oil, or with dubbing. In the incorporating charters of the old shoemaker's companies, and in ancient Acts of Parliament, the word cordwainer is almost invariably employed ; while, in Scotland, on the same occasions, it was altered to *cordiner*, and which is the term still in common use there."—No. 22, p. 176.

*Corviser* is a much rarer used word than that of cordwainer, and, as a consequence, I have generally found it wrongly applied to the *currier* in place of the shoemaker, by those writers who have noticed it. This, however, might easily have been rectified by a reference to that most valuable store of lexicographical information, the Glossary of Du Cange. That the early shoemaker had something to do with the preparing of leather for his trade purposes, seems, notwithstanding, from various facts bearing on this point that might be adduced, a sound conjecture ; and hence, so far, there may appear some reason for making him a currier, though not all a currier, but merely in the degree which his own particular requirements rendered necessary. In this appears the error. That the *corviser* was the shoemaker, in reality, the Hereford documents, themselves, fully prove : he is called so in the trade ordinances, written on parchment, as above mentioned, and also throughout the greater part of the book now about to be noticed, where almost every entry, from the reign of Elizabeth to that of Charles, is headed, "The accounts of the wardens of the Company of *Corvisers*," while in many of the earlier instances is added, "and shoemakers," but which addition is wholly put aside towards the time of Charles and the Commonwealth, thus showing that the company at that period thought this second name of shoemaker a surplussage, and might be securely, because legally, dispensed with!

And thus, though the name was continued, the original cause for it was forgotten ; for, doubtlessly, after all, *corviser* was but at first some *fashionable* appellation, marking some new phase in shoemaking at the time it took its rise, and hence, the higher skilled workman would assume for himself, as one who made shoes of some superior leather, and manufacture, the honour of being a *corviser*, (and, in every probability, the cordwainer was only another form of the same name), while the ruder artisan in the country, or for the poor, still remained the less distinguished *shoemaker*.

The fact, in both cases, may lie in this : that the *dry* hide or the skin of the goat, not being dressed in oil, and such as is still known by the name of Morocco or Spanish leather—whether from the style of the Moors of Tunisia, or of Cordova, both being alike—was at first made to suit the purposes of the shoemaker, by the shoemaker himself ; and which practice he continued till the law forbade him the exercise of these two-fold arts, as we shall find by one of the ordinances hereafter to be given, in accordance with several statutes where such is also enforced.

As thus, then, I have attempted, as far as my present very confined sources of reference permit, to make known these few probabilities, in regard to the old application of the words cordwainer and corviser, to the shoemaker, the matter, as already stated, that next comes under consideration, is such of the more noteworthy of the facts, as the principal book of the company contains ; and now, first, as to the time of the company's origin, which undoubtedly obtained a legalized existence in the year 1570, or, rather, in 1569, as shall be hereafter shewn. The proof is this—and a most interesting entry it is, written at the top of the opening page of the manifold business-proceedings de-

tailed in the volume, and immediately preceding the first expenditure of the company, and which expenditure shall next be given, as the heading, originally written in the margin, will show. Both are as follow :—

“ HERE BEGENETHE th accomptes (1) of David Jones and James Wilcox, being wardens of the fellowshippe and company of the corvisars and showmakers within the cyttey of hereff:\* in the yere of our Lord god 1570, Mathew Geffreyes (2) then being maior : the which saide wardens by their ttavell (3) and expenses, with the ayde of their fellowshippe, obtained a composition (4) att the handes of the Justices of Assise, for the tyme beinge, helped by the favor of the saide maior and common counsell of the said Cyttey. Dated the vijth daie of marche in the xijth yere of the raigne of our souraigne ladie Elizabeth by the grace of God Quene of Englonde, &c.

*Money lente bye sundrie of the felowshippe towards the obtaynyng of the composition aforesaid :—*

	s.	d.
IMPRIMIS—resceaved of John Poininge	iiij.	iiij
ITEM—resceaved of John harper .	vj	vijj
ITEM—resceaved of william boyle .		

---

(1) The accomptes : the accounts.

\* Hereford.

(2) In the list of Mayors given in Price's History of Hereford, a William Jeffres is set down as filling the office of Mayor for 1569 ; but this, no doubt is an error, as the contemporary record here transcribed, would seem to prove.

(3) Travell : travail ; trouble, labour, or exertion.

(4) The word *composition*, as might be understood from the nature of the document here spoken of, would seem to mean a charter, or such “ privileged ” rights, as the Judges and the Mayor, in their wisdom, deemed necessary for the well-being of the trade to whom it was granted. It is possible, however, to



ITEM—resceaved of Roger Cumberledge			
ITEM—resceaved of Lewys appowell	.	v	
ITEM—resceaved of Rice phelpotts	.		
ITEM—resceaved of William Davis	.	(5)	
ITEM—resceaved of Edward huges		ij	
ITEM—resceaved of Richarde herynge		ij	
ITEM—receaved of wilfm. hill	.		xx
ITEM—of Thomas Turner	.	ij	
ITEM—of James Wilcox	.	ij	liij
ITEM—of John Ffarell	.		xij
ITEM—of Evan Hyggyns	.	ij	
Some resceaved		iiij	li

Now, before we proceed any further, the question here may be distinctly mooted—and which has already been glanced at in one of the notes—of whether or not the above record is really to be considered as proving the origin of the company, as thus brought into existence by the “travell and expense” of the said wardens, David Jones and James Wilcox; with the “ayde” of the “money lente” by the other parties whose names are so interestingly introduced and given? My own opinion is, that the fact is not as at the first sight it may seem to be; that it does not

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have been a “composition” in another sense as well; that is, a sort of agreement come to between the company and these higher authorities; and as resulting, perhaps, from some of the earlier usages of the fraternity; and which, probably, had also been in the same way sanctioned in precedent times. But of this, more in another place.

(5.) The blanks in this, as in the three other instances before are here left because the sums paid have been so altered and scored over, that there would be no certainty of making choice of the proper figures to be retained. The whole sum, however, is clearly enough stated at the bottom to be four pounds sterling, as it for livre (a pound weight) makes known, and, hence, the origin of the present appellation for our money pound, the pure metal weighing so much formerly, which was silver.

prove this origin ; and this belief I ground, as well, mainly, on the general evidence already in my possession—clear and abounding evidence—that the great majority of these trades, and particularly those of the really useful order, and such, also, as the rudest germinations of the civilizing process must have produced, have the source of their incorporated importance in much more pristine ages than what their yet existing charters can be traced to—charters so often remodelled, or so often altogether annulled and re-granted again, altered or not, as the chance might be. As well, then, for this reason, as from what I discover in the very book whence the above extract has been drawn, I advance this opposing position. This discovery, or inference, I find, or draw, from the following further money statement :—

	s. d.
IMPRIMIS—resceaved of willm. boyle for his ad-	
myttance . . . . .	xij iij
ITEM—of Richard Parker . . . . .	jx
ITEM—of Thomas Eague . . . . .	xij iij
Sume resceaved	xxxvs. viijd.

Now, why is it that these three names alone, and one of which is in the foregoing list, as among the money lenders, paid the entrance charge, as here debited to them ? William Boyle, though he lends 3s. 4d., has, notwithstanding, to meet a demand made upon him for 13s. 4d. in addition ; and another, although not a lender, pays the same, and one 9s. Certainly, if all these men stood upon the same footing at this particular time, we should have had in these first receipts of the company all their admission monies set down alike, in accordance with the rules in use, as bearing upon their different circumstances ; but as it is not so, the thing seems to be plain enough, that the other,

or non-paying parties, being already free of the company, as belonging to it before the then new "composition" was obtained, so no payments were to come from them; but only from those who were not, in this way, members under the prior form of its existence.

That the company had this prior existence seems also most certain, from these two other entries in the wardens' receipts for this same year of 1570:—

	s. d.
ITEM—resceaved for a paynted cloth sold to James Wilks . . . . .	ix
ITEM—[for] the lytell ould pawle sold to Roger Cumberledge, now warden . . . . .	iij iij

Now, this cloth, we may well feel assured, did not belong to any individual, for then it had never appeared in the company's accounts. It was *painted*, too; having, probably, some sacred or mystic purpose, as was customary in all of these old companies when another religion was in fashion—ere the "Bluff Harry" tried his hand at a "Reformation," and his stern daughter, the very queen now living, gave the great trial her consolidating protection. Think, too, of the high price for this painted rag—nine shillings; and purchased under such circumstances, by one of the company—not in open auction, but, as it were, by connivance. So perished this relic of ancient Catholicity! From the keeping of the many it fell to the keeping of the one—from the company to the individual, James Wilks; and to whom it passed next, who now can tell? The same also may be inferred from the warden's bargain. What was this "lytell ould pawle," that even now brought the then wholesome sum of three shillings and fourpence? Whether of a worn-out devotional character or not, one thing is certain—it was "ould;" and

being old, and the pall of the company, under which so many of its members had been carried to their silent earth-sleeping places, so must that company itself have been in this very year of 1570, of a good old age.

Here, then, are two other proofs that David Jones and James Wilcox, wardens, were merely a sort of principal assistants at some after-birth of the company, and not the *accoucheurs* that had been called in at a much earlier period—at the time of its pristine parturition.

And the same book has another fact to the same purpose. This I find in the year 1590, when a shilling is given to a "poor old man who had belonged to the company." Now to be set down as "old" but twenty years after the formation of this company, could or would not have been done. This man to be considered old must at least have been sixty, perhaps eighty, or upwards; and the time he had ceased to be an apprentice, allowing sixty to be the then extent of his age, must be forty years before, thus carrying the question back to at least the year 1550, for then, as was usual on the expiration of the term indenture, he must not only have secured the freedom of his particular company, but also his right to assume the privileges of his higher municipal citizenship.

But it is needless to carry this subject further; though in the little that has been said, some degree of insight may be given of the higher antiquity of these Trade Companies than what may generally be supposed, or can now be certified of them, from any existing documents.

## No. III.

## THE "COMPOSITION"—A DISCREPANCY—TRUE HISTORY.

The precise character of the document called the "Composition" needs now to be shewn ; as well from the intrinsic interest which it possesses, in an inquiry like the present, as preparatory to such extracts as shall seem necessary to be taken from the now sole chief book of the company. This document, unfortunately, has been much injured, through, it is said, the neglect of the individual who had last the custody of it, in his right of being master of the company. One portion of it has been most recklessly cut away, to nail, perhaps, across some rotten, dilapidated window-frame, or for other equally uncaring purpose ; while different parts of the writing are so obliterated, from exposure to wet or damp, as if this formerly so much venerated issue of the exertions of the wardens, David Jones and William Wilcox, and others, was now only to be thought worthy of being thrust into some nook about household water-barrel, or cider tub ! Two sheets of parchment were made use of for this instrument, opening from the top, and fastened, in a fold, at the bottom, and from which fold originally depended three seals, stamped in red wax, on hanging parchment slips, two of these seal-impressions, the ones on the right and left, being those of the Justices of Assize who sanctioned the various ordinances, rules, or laws of the society, which this document contained ; and the third, or centre one, that of the Mayor. The names of these Justices were, Edward

Saunders, Knight, and Thomas Carnes ; and the date of the signing, the same as stated, in regard to the month—the 8th of March—in the warden's record before given, but the year different, it being 1569.

On making known, then, this difference of time as respects the year, there may seem to many, at first thought, an error in the extract just referred to, as taken from the Register Book, for by this name shall be called for the future the manuscript volume of entries to which attention is here directed.\* The discrepancy, however, thus alluded to, may be explained in this way. These insertions seem to have been uniformly made but yearly ; and in the main consisted of the income and disbursements of the society—of such monies, received and paid, as from time to time came within the duties of the wardens, the entire yearly account being, no doubt, transcribed at the one time from the various loose memoranda which it would be requisite to conserve for such purpose. Hence, therefore, the first business entries of the company necessarily bear the date of 1570, and thus, in the oversight which this circumstance occasioned, the exact year when the composition was granted has been mistaken, and 1570 written down in place of 1569.

Pass we now, then, from this attempt to reconcile, what might otherwise appear to the reader, a discrepancy of rather an unusual character—considering the contemporaneousness, or close proximity, of time, between both the records under notice—were this explanation withheld ; inasmuch as it would be difficult to conceive how a society

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\* This, likewise, is the name employed by the company itself, as is seen in an entry concerning the cost of this book, in one of its early pages.

full and completely established in 1569, came to have its first accounts not only dated in the year after, but, also, to place upon their own records that this very year was the one of their establishment. This, therefore, being so far set right, it will now be needful to show of what matter this parchment document consists—what were the ordinances it embodies, as concerning a most useful class of the citizen artificers or tradesmen of former times ; and still the more it will be needful to do so, as no portion of our general literature has experienced greater neglect than this very department—a department, in its manifold diversities, so intimately connected with the great effective workings of the industrial interests in the *past*, and thus, consequently, the best archetypes that can be referred to of the growth of the combined social edifice as it now is, and as the foundation on which all our subsequent improvements (if they but *prove* so ?) must be placed ; and by looking backward and onward from which, a true insight into the history and probable future destinies of man can alone be obtained. “ The thing I want to see ”—writes one of the profoundest thinkers, and most independently original minds of the present times, Thomas Carlyle —“ The thing I want to see is not Red-book lists, and court calendars, and parliamentary registers, but the *life of man in England* ; what men did, thought, suffered, enjoyed ; the form, especially the spirit of their terrestrial existence, its outward environments, its inward principle ; how and what it was ; whence it proceeded, whither it was tending. Mournful, in truth, is it to behold what the business called ‘ history,’ in these so enlightened and illuminated times, still continues to be. Can you gather from it, read ’till your eyes go out, any dimmest shadow in answer to that great question—how men lived and had their being ; were

it but economically, as what wages they got, and what they bought with these? Unhappily you cannot. History will throw no light on any such matter. At the point where living memory fails, it is all darkness. Whether the men were better off, in their mere larders and pantries, or were worse off than now? History, as it stands all bound up in gilt volumes, is but a shade more instructive than the wooden volumes of a back-gammon board. How my prime minister was appointed is of less moment to me than how my house servant was hired." And then, he says again, after continuing the same force of remark and style of elucidation for some time longer, but "The time is approaching when history will be attempted on quite different principles; when the court, the senate, and battle-field, receding more and more into the background, the temple, the workshop, the social hearth, will advance more and more into the foreground; and history will not content itself with shaping some answer to that question: how were men taxed and kept quiet then? but will seek to answer this other infinitely wider and higher question: how and what were men then? Not our government only, or the house wherein our life was led, but the life itself we led there, will be inquired into."

Such facts, then, as it is the ostensible purpose of these papers to make known, (and part in answer to the two-fold inquiry of the strong-minded man just quoted—"What were men then? and the life they led?"), and which I am now about to introduce to the thoughtful notice of the reader, may, I hope, be early evidence in behalf of the very important prediction thus coming from the lips of Philosophy; not the prediction of a dreamer, but such prediction as the human mind, when properly enlarged by a true knowledge of the Past, and powerfully illuminated from



the effects of the same enlargement, feels necessarily compelled to utter, forcing a way still resolutely through the future, and in the splendour it carries along with it, being thereby enabled to dispel much of the darkness of this future, and prognosticate as certainly of various resulting occurrences, in connection with social destiny, as the husbandman augurs of what will be the produce of those tiny seeds wherewith he impregnates the all-fructifying womb of the earth, and whence—as is the nature of the impregnation he employs—will come the sweet-smelling clover, the equally as sweet hay, the heavy-headed corn, or any other of those countless productions of nature which give such interest to the forecasting intelligence of the hard-handed worker, and as shall make, at their various harvests, so glorious a sight, and tend, in the great economy of life, to so glorious a purpose.

As the world, then, has already heard so much of noble, and saintly, and royal seeds, why—to continue our mode of illustration between the vegetable and human products—why may we not now, at last, and for the time to come, concern ourselves, in some degree, with shoemaker seed, sweep seed, scavenger seed, and tailor, tapster, and tinker seed; or any other description of the vitalizing agencies which make up the whole garden,—or, if the phrase may appear more suitable,—the whole of the present weedy wilderness of human society! The small dinner party I have already described, are, therefore, all that now remain of nearly three hundred harvests of the shoemaker seed, as made ready for the ground and planted in the reign of the royal Elizabeth. In the early spring of the year 1569, these, a particular class of the social seedsmen, as things then went in Hereford, dibbled in a new way, under new hopes, and with (perhaps) augmented num-

bers. The number of confederate labourers thus employed might have been about thirty ; all of them, as we may suppose, equally exerting themselves, at least as far as their capacities might allow ; and those who were the wealthiest giving the greater share of money aid, in very proof of the firmness of their faith in what they were about. And, now, what sort of regulations were they, which these, the members of this special society, agreed among themselves to abide by (under sanction of the heads of the law)—as the seed they were dropping into the ground, and from which they were to expect their rewarding “harvest home” at the proper season ?

## No. IV.

## THE ORDINANCES OF THE COMPANY.

The Ordinances of the associated corvisers of Hereford, in the year 1569, were these, as they are here set forth in an abridged form—an abridgment made at the time, and by the parties themselves ; and thus a much better one than any that could be produced by a modern hand, in an endeavour to bring the true bearings of the whole within the possibility of getting printed in a journal which has otherwise so many demands upon its pages. As the original document, too, in which these rules are given at full, is, as has been before stated, so very imperfect—the first six of the number being wholly lost, and the writing so damaged in different places, that nothing whatever at these places can be made out, even sufficient to base any satisfactory sort of conjecture upon, hence this abstract will prove most serviceable, as embodying an essence of the entire matter, and put together in the spirit and peculiar form of phrase in which it was then, and by which it can only now, at this wide distance of time, be best understood.

This is it ; and to which I have placed such elucidatory notes as seemed to be necessary at particular places, for the easier comprehension of the general reader :—

# A BREFE NOTE TAKEN OUTE OF THE COMPOSITION AND ORDYNANCE.

1.—Imprimis—That ther shal be chosen twoe wardens and fower 'socyatts (1) yerely, on the Tuysdaie next after Sayntte Martenes daie in the morninge.

2.—Item—That the wardenes for the tyme beinge shall yeld vppe their accompts on that daye vppon payne of x li, and that the said wardenes shall rede or cause to be redde to the said companye, the saide boke of ordynances vppon payne of iijs. iiijd. ; and the youngest Mr. (2) to be bedell ; and he in defaulte of his dutie to lose iijs. iiijd.

3.—Item—That yf any of the masters of the company refuse to be wardens, then to lose xxs.

4.—Item—That the saide wardens shall yerely kepe iiij halls in the yere ; and they that come natt to the same, vppon lawfull somons geven, to lose xijd.

5.—Item—That every prentice shall paye for his admyt-tance iijs. iiijd., and every foryne to pay iij li. vjs. viijd.

6.—Item—That no Mr. or other shall kepe butt one shoppe, nor shall natt kepe any staundyne in the streate vppon payne of xxs.

7.—That none shall cut or make any wares in the country, nor out of the shoppe of one of the companye, vppon payne of forfeiture xxs.

8.—Item — That the wardenes muste make searche whether ther be any insufficyent wares made amonge the company, and the offenders thereof to lose xxs.

9.—Item—That the wardens may enter into the house of the curryores in the daye tyme as ofte as they lyste,

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(1) Four associates.

(2) Mr. ; master—one of the company. Mrs. ; masters.

and yf any defaulte be founde, the said curryor natto (3) lose above iijs. iiijd.

10.—Item—That none of the felowshippe shall currye any lethur within any of their houses uppon payne of xxs.

11.—Item—That none of the felowshippe shall suffer their servants to work on the Sondayes, in Auguste only excepted, vppon payne of iijs. iiijd (4).

12.—Item—That none of the felowshippe shall sell any wares but suche as shall be made within the cytteye, vppon payne of iijs. iiijd.

13.—Item—That yf any of the felowshippe refuse to be corrected, or despyce the wardens, than the mayor to cease (5) his fyne accordiolye.

14.—Item—The manner of the othe geven to any that shall be admytted to the felowshippe or companye.

[The oath is not here written down, but was as follows, as I now copy it from the ordinances at large:—

YE SHAL BE GOOD AND TRUE to the Quene our Souraigne Ladye, and her heires and successors Kinges and Quenes of Englonde, and to be obediente to the wardenes of this felowshippe for the tyme being, in lawfull manner, and shall keepe secrete all the lawful counceill of the saide felowshippe, and shall observe all manner of rules and ordinances by the same felowshippe made, or hereafter to be made, concernyng the ordering of the same felowshippe, beinge aproved accordinge to the statutes in that behalfe provided: soe helpe me God.]

15.—Item—That iff any of the felowshippe be approved

(3) *Natto*; not to.

(4) In the ordinances at large, these three exceptions are stated to be the Sundays on which *fairs* or *markets* were held.

(5) *Cease*; to cease, or levy the amount.

forsworne, that the same to be putt oute of the company for ever.

16.—Item—That none shall occupie (6) tyll he be first admytted by the wardenes, uppon payne of v li.

17.—Item—That every widowe may occupye, she beinge her selfe a lone and sole (7).

18.—Item—That none of the felowshippe shall take any prentice for lesse tyme than for vij years. And that he be natt known for a theffe, nor borne oute of the Queenes domynions, vppon payne of xxs. ; nor shall kepe the saide prentice above one moneth vntyl he be bounde, and recorded in the courte, payinge ijs. iiijd. And if he happen natto shewe his indentures, havinge commaundemente from the wardens, then he to lose vjs. viijd.

19.—Item—That yf any prentyce complayne vppon his Mr., vppon any misdemenor, then he to abyde the correction of the mayor ; and that none of the saide Mrs. shall putt anye of the servaunts of any others of the same felowshippe to work without his Mrs. lawfull lycens, upon payne of vjs. viijd.

20.—Item—That yf any of the felowshippe refuse to paye suche forfeite, or he shall happen to offend in, then ytt shalbe lawfull for the wardenes, with the eldest sergyaunte, to strayne (8) vppon his bodye and goodes.

21.—Item—That everye one of the felowshippe shall come to the weddinge and buryinge of any of the saide

(6) *Occupie*, or *occupye* ; to follow ; to practise, or work at.

(7) *A lone* and *sole* ; not to marry again ; or to still keep by herself, "havinge," as the larger ordinances say, "sufficiente workmen to be her journeyemen."

(8) *Strayne* ; *distrain*, as we now would write.

felowshippe, havinge sommons geven vnto him by the bedell, vppon payne of xijd.

22.—Item—That the wardens shall natt hire the pawle to any straunger vnder xijd,, and to every of the felowship vjd.

23.—Item—That yf the wardens do natt their dutyes, beinge approved (9) by iij or iij honest persons, then they to lose vjs. viijd. And yf any person do complayne without occasyon, then he to lose vjs. viijd.

And the sayde felowshippe doth graunte yerely to the pavinge of the streates vjs. viijd.

And to the eldest seriaunte yerelye xijd.

And yf also any person be molested either in bodye or in goodes, he to complayne to the Justices of Assyse for the tyme being, within the countey of Hereff. (10).

(9) *Approved*; that is, such neglect being proved *against* them; and not being *approved of* for this neglect.

(10) *Hereff.* seems to have been the usual contraction of the period for Hereford; and has here been retained, as likewise in a foregoing instance, merely to notice the circumstance, and as perhaps, it was then not only locally, but generally pronounced. With this exception, and that of "Mr." (master), the rest of the contractions have been filled up, for the greater ease of the reader who has not been accustomed to the mode of writing employed in these old documents; and, in after cases, the same practice shall be followed.

## No. V.

## REMARKS ON THE ORDINANCES.

Such, as given in my preceding paper, were the powers, and such the limitation to the powers, of the Corviser's Company in Hereford, a little after the middle of the sixteenth century; and now it will be necessary to offer a few observations on the subject of these ordinances.

I have before observed on the evident greater antiquity of this company than that apparently assigned to it in the date of the parchment document or original "composition" from which the foregoing heads have been taken; and now again, in the very first of these ordinances, an additional proof to the same purpose is discernible. The company were yearly to appoint their new wardens on the "Tuesdaie next after Saynte Martines daie." But why after St. Martin's day? As Crispin and his brother Crispianus were, according to the usual pristine religious bearings of all these trade societies, the patron saints of shoemakers in general, so the employing (but then not altogether so much of an employer as now,) or master shoemaker—*master* of his art (and as we have still our College Masters of Arts in the profession of Learning), and as the same class of the trade, and of all other of the trades, are still called masters from the like cause, because of this very honourable efficiency, and not from their prouder



position in being merely placed behind a counter, nor yet from their greater possessions ; so, I say, this employer or master, applied to the Priesthood of these early ages, and the Priesthood, as well from the abundance of their charity, as in the resources of their learning, and, perhaps, in the certainty of some proper reward, soon found some suitable saint under whose high and holy banner the humble christian worker in shoe-leather might range himself in loving brotherhood with his particular class, and with an eye, no doubt, at the same time to keep as many of the advantages of that class as strictly to themselves as it was possible so to do ; or, if not wholly satisfied in respect to these mundane considerations, to endeavour for other and still more gratifying advantages.

The day of the beatitude of St. Martin, or rather, the first Tuesday after, for thus this annual festival of feasting and free companionship, in the license in this way obtained, could never fall on a Sunday, but always on such day as secured the fullest possibility of enjoyment to those concerned ; this day, then, had the company had no prior existence to the year 1569, would never have been the chosen anniversary time of the shoemakers at the epoch of the "reforming" Elizabeth, nor yet that of her father, however different it might be under the reign of the first enthroned daughter of the same father—the Philip-of-Spain-wedded, as also Romish-Pope-adoring, Mary. No ; this it surely would not : and the still surer we may be of the fact, from the incidents already adduced in support of their much earlier age of incorporation—whether self-incorporated (adulterine bodies, as such were called,) or not—in the passage on the sale of the hearse cover, and of the "paynted cloth" which was bargained away for nine shillings. In the year 1569, the martyr-day of Saint Martin

was merely a day of memory—of usage, and not one of idolized and idolizing importance. The queen-killing Harry was no *saint* ; nor the common man and woman destroying Mary ; nor the equally callous man and woman destroyer Elizabeth—and <sup>couple</sup> ~~sister~~-destroyer as well ! Nor yet were those all saints who meekly stood at the high altars of the church—the Cranmers and Bonners of those times ; *not* saints, although various of these croziered dignitaries, like many of the more lowly victims, bravely bore the burning of flesh and bone for their then fashionable fealty of faith—a faith, perhaps, oftener the result of the severity of passion, than the sincerity of piety. In times like these, the shoemaker, who has ever been a schismatic—one who, if not an originator—and even this he has often been, as in the case of Quakerism, and many other *isms*—in such times, when it is a well known fact that the unsatisfied in this trade, more than in any other trade, are so often found to make sides in all new mental adventures ; in such times, we are not to suppose that one of the blinded out lights of the disgraced Roman calendar was still to be a *light* for the shoemaker—for this shoemaker to kneel at the halo of such a name—and to glorify his appetite, in his annual feastings and drinkings, in the plenitude of the plenary indulgences of any such saint.

Here, then, from this bit of strictly apocryphal matter, as I may repeat once more, comes still stronger proof that our Hereford Company of Corvisers had its birth in far earlier times than either those of Elizabeth or her father,—times when every profession sought its saint ; and Holy Church, in due admiration of such beseeching sanctity, always afforded the means to gratify the reverential, or, as this much altered English nation now would call it, this *superstitious* desire.

Thus it is in history, as in crime, the truth will be ever getting out. Some long overlooked chink in the social, as in the stone-and-mortar, ruin, will let in light—light sufficient to enable one to take hold of a few of the still existing certainties about us ; that is, if we are only earnestly resolved to pry after and test them as deserving of our scrutiny, and worthy additions to our information.

Rule the Second offers, though quite in a different way, some matter, likewise, for remark. By this we find the care that the company took of their own proper education in the affairs of their trade, or as a protection against the treacherousness of memory. There was no printing of "society rules" at this period, as is now so common ; and so one or other of the wardens were either to read themselves, or cause to be "redde," these, the mutual obligations of their fraternity. This rule, also, explains the way the headship of the company was ordered, being a sort of apprentice-office, which all alike had to pass through, and, therefore, though of the lowest description, not the less to be neglected as to how, and by whom, it was to be regularly filled.

The Third Rule, so plainly plenary as it is, needs no comment ; while by the Fourth we find, that to hold a "hall" was then tantamount to our present phrase of holding a "meeting," or "conference," or, as the printers call it, a "chapel," or, as it is called in a higher place, a "parliament." Four of these halls or assemblies were to be held in the year ; the whole of the society were thus to meet in their own place of meeting or "hall ;" these were their "quarter days," and still we have days of the same name for receiving our salaries and paying our rents ; and further, it may be here, also, noted, that the journeyman in most of our modern trades' unions—and the shoemaker is one of

these—has, likewise, his regular quarterly epochs, which are always considered to be a sort of general meetings—meetings effectual in transacting the most weighty affairs of the society so concerned. How much, then, of the Past is thus, in a manner, still shaking hands with the Present? There is a closer kindred between them than many may imagine; yet, if but the proper trouble will be taken, they may soon learn better.

The Fifth is a most important rule: An apprentice to be made free of the company had to pay but 3s. 4d.—that is, should such person have been indentured to any one of its “masters,” and duly served the obligations of such indenture; while, on the other hand, were the claimant of any such freedom to be a “foryner”—not a Frenchman, or Spaniard, or Turk, or a Welsh, Scotch, or Irish, man—but one, who, in his boyhood, had first put on the leathern apron and learned to pull the waxen thread at Leominster, at Lugwardine, at Huntington, or even at Holmer; then he, such learner, for all this, had the brand-mark of “foryner” stamped on his forehead; and could not, in Hereford, be *corversized* and *citizenized* (for both these privileges went, in a sense, together), without being mulct in *twenty times* the sum of the *in-dwelling* apprentice. There was no “free trade” at this period; nor no abrogation of the navigation laws. The landsman, or shipman, could only obtain unmolested admittance to his own “port;” from all others he was walled out, and *gated* out; and only by feeing the palm could he ever be made welcome. Yet, probably, there was, then, some good—some really substantial—reasons for all this; reasons, which Adam Smith, had he “flourished,” as the phrase is, in those ages, had, himself, been one of the sternest vouchers for; and the same, no doubt, also, of our present Cobden, and of all the rest of the Leaguers—British and continental.

And, again, to the like purpose, what says the Sixth Rule? That no master shall keep but *one* shop, nor be allowed to have any street-standing. Here, then, in another way, is the same "protection" system in all its rigidity. The wealthy shoemaker of Bridge-street was not to be permitted to serve bare feet with the article of his manufacture in any other locality than in Bridge-street: the bare foot must *come* to him, and he not to *go* to the bare foot. He could open no other shop, either in Broad-street, Bye-street, the High-town, St. Owen's, Eign-street, or in any other place; nor even was he allowed, no matter what might be the crowding of his customers, in their bare feet, or otherwise, to spread a piece of deal board over a tressel in the street, before his own door, and so, by the greater elbow room he might in this way obtain for his business, be enabled to satisfy his customers the quicker, and to serve the larger number of them. Such sort of "free trade" was not at this period to be permitted. It would have been thought a most blameable encouragement of "monopoly," that ever terrible cry of dealer against dealer, artisan against artisan, and of the public in general against the *patented* monopoly purchasers from our kings and queens. Moses, that terrible bane of the now London tailor, and Flint, that equally trade-gourmandising opponent of the now London shoemaker, would have found their "masters," in verity, had they lived then; and dared, as they now do, in the year 1569. A single home-shell for each, it would have been said, as it is with the common wilk, is enough for each; and let them at their peril insist upon any more.

And the Seventh Rule has the like object in view; for while the shopkeeper could only make his sales in one shop, so, as another "protection," in another way, he was

not to be permitted to transfer his trade labours beyond his own town walls ; and thus, as it might be, by "connivance"—a word then of fearful import—to encourage the competition of the "foryner"—the humble shoemaker of Huntington, or Holmer ; he who, on market and fair days, was allowed to put forth his street-standings, and sell his shoes to all who wanted to buy ; but then, and then only, was he so allowed to sell. No doubt, too, but there was fear in another way in giving permission to the Hereford "master" to "make any wares in the country." The incorporated corviser assumed for himself a higher order of ability—a superior "cunning" in his "mystery" to the mere clouting shoemaker ; and, therefore, how very impolitic it would have been to run the chance of teaching this "cunning" to the "foryner." No ; there was no "free trade," then—neither in selling nor yet in teaching.

Rule the Eighth, appears, however, of a very different order to either of the three last preceding ones. Here, as it would seem, there is a remarkable generosity manifested in behalf of the public or the shoe-buyer in general. There was to be no tenderness showed to what would now be called "tricks in trade," but all "insuffycient wares made among the company," were to be diligently searched after by the wardens, and the delinquents made to suffer for their dishonesty by being compelled to pay the then heavy penalty of twenty shillings.

While by the Ninth Rule, the shoemaker, again, on the other hand, had a most effective legal protection accorded him in his right to secure, for his trade purposes, the best quality of material. In the year 1389, a Legislative Statute was passed which forbade the shoemaker to be a tanner, or the tanner a shoemaker ; and in 1503, another which said, "No shoemaker shall occupy the mystery of a currier, nor

currier shall occupy the mystery of a shoemaker." One trade was judged by the kingly and parliamentary wisdom of those periods, and for long after, to be quite sufficient for the *one* man, and any wider permission of the most dangerous tendency to the community at large. Hence the precaution in causing the above and other similar enactments to be made ; and, hence, too, the equivalent protection which the shoemaker received in being permitted, in the persons of the wardens of his company, to make search after all badly prepared leather.\* It was delicately guarded against, however, in these inquisitive visits, that they should not take place in the night, but only "in the daye tyme" ; and, then, the penalty in each case of default was but three-and-fourpence, which was only one-sixth of that which the shoemaker himself had to pay when detected in any kindred wrong, as regarded the manufacture of "insufficyent wares."

Rule the Tenth sets forth, "That none of the felowshippe shall currye any lethur within any of their houses," under terror of the like weighty fine there expressed ; while it is quite certain if they were not to do so in their own houses, there would be very little likelihood of the currier permitting the use of *his* house to the encouragement of any such dangerous rivalry.

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\* By the Statute passed the 6th of Elisabeth, chap. 22, which wholly concerns the leather trade, there was to be appointed "yearly two, three, or more persons, of the most honest and skilful men within their several offices, liberties and authorities, which shall, as often as they shall think good, or need shall be, make search within their limits, and shall have a mark and seal prepared for that purpose."

## No. VI.

## CONCLUSION OF THE REMARKS.

The Eleventh Rule opens forth an interesting retrospect for the mind in the present age. No work was to be done on a Sunday ! Christianity brought along with it this great blessing to the humble sons of Toil ; though long, as it would seem, was it before the beneficent obligation could be fully enforced. The subservient or "servant" craftsman, though he had at this period, and for at least two or three centuries before, a *wages* return for his work, either in full, or after allowing for the expense of his "meate and drinke," yet something of the old leaven of his double Serf-and-Pagan condition remained, and the law of both the parliament and his own special fraternity was necessary to secure to him the advantages of this one day of rest. The unabridged Ordinance on this subject it may be well to quote here at large, which is as follows :—

"Item—Ytt is ordeyned that none of the fellowshippe shall suffer any journeyman or apprentice to doe any worke concerning the said occupation, in their house or else where, to the vse and behoof of any of theym, vppon Sundales ; neyther shall have out any kind of their ware out of their shoppes into the streets, to the intent to sell the same, vppon Sundayes, upon paine of forfeiture for every time makinge default in any of the said articles, iij*s*. iij*d*. ; the one moyty thereof to the vse of the Mayor, and the other moyty thereof to the vse of the fellowshippe. The three Sundayes being markett dayes, in Auguste excepted."

Here, then, the rule in "abstract" and the rule in full throw a most useful light upon each other. By the first we find that the journeymen and apprentices of the Company were not to work on Sundays, with three exceptions ; while, by the second, we learn the purpose of these



exceptions. In August the whole of the rural population are tasked to their utmost exertion in getting in the harvest; and then, and then only, market or fair days were permitted to be holden during three of these harvest Sundays: on which days the husbandman, having cast aside his scythe for the time, journeyed to the distant town, and there made such purchases as his inclinations or his means led him to seek or he could command. This is the social secret of the exceptions noticed; and curious the fact itself is, as a sort of tender-hearted compromise between the every-day bondage of an earlier system, the claims of the church, and the urgencies of those peculiarities of position, when the dweller in the country could alone obtain much of what he wanted in the large market town; and as he could not afford in that season, which uniformly makes the greatest demand upon his labour, to go journeying and shopping on the work day, so was it allowed that he might do so on the Sunday, and three market Sundays to be ostensibly held for his particular accommodation.\*

We now come to the Twelfth Rule; and here, again, as

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\* By the statute 27th Henry VI, c. 5, the *four* Harvest Sundays had this privilege; while the following clause of the 5th Eliz., chap. 4, bears, in another way, on the attention then paid to the efficient getting in of the harvest:—"That in the time of hay or corn harvest, the Justice of Peace, and every of them, and also the constable or other head officer of every township, upon request, and for the avoiding of the loss of any corn, grain or hay, shall and may cause all such artificers and persons as be meet to labour, by the discretions of the said justices and constables, or other head officers, or by any of them, to serve by the day for the mowing, reaping, shearing, getting or inning of corn grain and hay, according to the skill and quality of the persons; and that none of the said persons shall refuse so to do, upon pain to suffer imprisonment in the stocks by the space of two days and one night."

What would the artizan who at present earns his three, four, or five shillings a day, say if such a law was now to be enforced; that the tailor should be compelled to put by his needle, and the shoemaker his awl, and labour all day in the open field, with scythe in hand, and yet get no more than, perhaps, 1s. 6d. in the day? He certainly would feel that such was a hard compulsion.

in almost every one of these rules, there is something worthy of remark. "None of the fellowshippe shall sell any wares but such as shall be made in the cytteye." Every article was to be "town made," as still we see this phrase exhibited in the window placards of many of our modern manufacturers—made either by the members themselves of the company, or the "servants" of these members; and thus to secure, as ever, the interests of the parties confederated against the possibility of the shoes and boots of the out-dwelling "foreigner" being sold in any other way but from the stall on a common market-day.

The Thirteenth Rule has its interest from another cause. There a higher authority than that assumed by the Company itself is acknowledged: this is the authority of the Mayor, as the chief officer of the city, and who, as we find by this rule, could exercise the power of "correcting" any refractory member, and that, too, at his own discretion; a certain "meiety" of such fine, being, no doubt, as usual, to be appropriated to himself, and another to the "common cofer" of the city.

The Fourteenth "Item," or Rule, is the oath of membership. By this, the party taking it, not only binds himself to "keepe secrete all the lawful counceill of the said fellowshippe," but he also swears allegiance "to the Quene our Souraigne Ladye, and her heires and successors Kinges and Quenes of Englonde."

And, next, by the Fifteenth Rule, we learn, that a member proved guilty of forswearing himself, "shall," according to the words in the fuller ordinances, be "putt out of the fellowshippe for ever, without redemption, in example of all others."

The Sixteenth Rule, like the rest, is in strict character with the times. To open a shop, or to "occupie," as the

term is there employed, without first becoming a member of the company, subjected the party so thoughtlessly committing himself, to no less a penalty than five pounds sterling, the "fellowshippe," the "mayor," and the "comon cofer," as the larger ordinances state, getting each their moieties.

Rule the Seventeenth, along with the foot-note already given in the page where it appears, will need no further illustration than what the rule itself affords, as here transcribed in full :—

"Item.—That every widdowe, after the decease of her husband which was of the said fellow-shipp, shall and may occupy the said occupation for soe longe as she shal be sole, having sufficient workmen to be her journeymen, and for that shall be contributory, and pay all charges and duties as a master of the same occupation."

The Rule concerning apprentices, which is the next, or Eighteenth, absorbs a larger space in both the Abstract and the Ordinances in full, than any other of the whole number. The subject was as important as diverse ; and the statute law of the country adding to this importance and diversity. By this, different trades were, in many cases, indulged or constrained in the making of different regulations ; though, as a common principle, the apprentice was to be indentured for seven years. In regard to the cordwainer, the master-man was allowed to take three apprentices, that is, if he kept at the same time one journeyman, and along with every other apprentice above the three so permitted, another journeyman was to be employed.\* The rule under notice says nothing itself of

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\* The portion of the Statute (5th Eliz., cap. 4. 1562,) here referred to, is worded thus :—" And be it further enacted, that all and every person and persons that shall have three apprentices in any of the said crafts, mysteries, or occupations of a clothmaker, fuller, sheerman, weaver, taylor, or shoemaker, shall retain and keep one other journeyman, upon pain for every default therein ten pounds."

this, though, doubtlessly, the law was strictly followed in the doings of those concerned ; and as enforced and scrutinised by the watchful care of the ever-present and potent jurisdiction of the chief municipal authorities. A very conclusive proof that this was the case, and one of the most apposite kind, because it is to be found in what is called "The Great Black Book" of Hereford itself—being a record of the proceedings of its corporate authorities during much of an early and interesting period—may be adduced. In this book I discover the following peculiarly welcome entry, inasmuch as it will show, in addition to the more paramount overlooking above noticed, how closely the proceedings of the greater and lesser corporations were made to assimilate in the same city, and at no very great distance of time from each other :—

" At a laweday holden at the cytye of heref., before John Gibbs, mayor of the sayd cytye, the twentye daye of Aprill, in the fourthe yere of the Raigne of our Soueraigne lady Elizabethe, by the grace of god queyne of england, fraunce, and Irelande, Defender of the ffaith, &c. Yt ys ordeyned, enacted, & Agreed by the sayd mayor, hys Bretherne & the thre inquests\* at thys present lawedaye, that no Artyfycer or crafte of any of the occupations shall take any Apprentyce or Apprentyes to any such occupacion mysterye or crafte unles the master or masters of everye suche occupacion do take all such Apprentices by Indentures, made, sealed, & delyvered betwene the sayd masters & Apprentices. And that the masters of suche Apprentices shall within one moneth next after the ensealinge of the sayd Indentures bringe the sayd Indentures before the mayre of the sayd Cytye, there to be enrpylled by the Towneclerke of the sayd Cytye, paying to the sayd Towneclerke for the enrolling thereof, vijd., to be paid by the masters, upon payne of everye master of everye occupacion offending contrarye to this ordynauce, or to any Article thereof, xxs.

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\* "The first or great inquest consisted of the members of the Common Council of the city, the second of the next worthiest and substantial of the citizens within the walls, and the third inquest of those that inhabited without the city walls."—*Johnson's Lecture on the "Ancient Customs of the City of Hereford,"* p. 7.

And that all and every suche prentices that their indentures be not enrolled as is aforesaid, shall not enjoye theire freedome of theyre occupacions but as foren persons within the seide citie; the seide sume to be divyded into three parts, that ys to saye, vjs. viijd. to be payd to the mayor of the sayd citie for the tyme beyng; vjs. viijd. to the comen cofer of the sayd citie, to be payd to the hande of the Chamberlyne of the sayd citie; & vjs. viijd. vnto the vse of that occupacion, to be levyed of the godes & cattles of everye suche offender by dystres."

Here, as it will be perceived, is not only the obligation for a youth to be indentured distinctly set forth, but the enrolment and the fee for so doing, is alike specially mentioned. Nor, is this all; for no such enrolment is to be deferred beyond a "moneth," the trade and the municipal law concurring to the very word in the same statement.

This rule about apprentices has also two other noticeable injunctions. By it we learn that the youth who would aspire to become a member of the "gentle craft," was neither to be a *thief*, nor one who was born out of his Majesty's dominions. Once a thief, as it would seem, and ever a thief,—at least, as far as the trade of a shoemaker was concerned. Here, at any rate, there was to be no chance allowed of "a reformation of criminals." And so, in the same way—once a foreigner, and ever a foreigner. Sovereign and shoemaker joined together in this two-fold interdiction; the union being as strangely anomalous, as was the wisdom that urged to such a forbiddance. At least, so we think at present.

The Nineteenth Rule has something, too, about apprentices. A master being complained of by his apprentice, then such master was to "abyde the correction of the mayor." This, doubtlessly, is the meaning intended, and as was so understood at the time, though from the way the rule is worded, it might seem that it was the complaining apprentice who was to be corrected, and not the

party complained against. The second portion of the same rule deals with quite a different matter—that of the very heinous offence of “stocking,” as it is called in some other trade ordinances which I have seen ; and which various of our antient statutes have mentioned, and provided punishment for. This “stocking,” then, is the crime of one employer or master-man enticing away the journeyman or “servant” of another, that such servant might do the work of the enticing party, and hence to the injury of the original employer. Before anything of this sort could be done a “lycens” was first to be obtained, the hired workman having no power to do so of himself, and hence, so far, he was but a mere *servant*.

The next, or Twentieth Rule, places the Company in its highest “pride of place.” Here it is all supreme. By this we find how powerful it was in the manner it took to enforce obedience. Like the kingly authority itself, it could distrain—both upon the “bodye and goodes” of each and every offending or contumacious party. The wardens, in conjunction with that very prominent and efficient municipal officer, the “eldest sergyaunte,” could do this ; and no doubt but that which they could do, they *did* do, whenever their assistance was deemed essential to the weal and reputation of the society.

These men, notwithstanding, were not, in whole, a hard, unrelenting, uncompassionating compound of dominancy, and as the Twenty-first Rule, now to be noticed, will show. By this we see that there was much of goodness attempted through the means of their confederacy, just as the foregoing rule, according to the notions of our own age, may manifest of arbitrary authority. Here we read “that every one of the felowshippe shall come to the weddinge and buryinge of any of the said felowshippe ;” and sweet and beau-

tiful indeed is the injunction,—thus linking tradesman with tradesman—in despite of all the rivalry of shop, in their times of joy and times of sorrow—going with the bridegroom and his bride to church, or, at the disastrous trial of death, following the cold corpse of either husband or wife to the grave !

And, then, again, we find by the Twenty-second Rule, that the Company had its own pall,—a special specimen of the most tender-hearted carefulness, and probably of as much pride in displaying how much it surpassed the palls of other companies. I have remarked before on the “ould pawle” as proof of the earlier formation of the company than the year 1569, while in this mention of the like article, in the ordinances agreed to of the same year, we find the reason why the said pall was set aside or sold, which was not only “ould,” but “lytell” as well, and, therefore, not as likely to be sought after for the burial of “any straunger,” as this new and larger pall might be, and that too, while the surviving friends of such “straunger” had to pay as much as twelve pence for its use, though the charge for covering the coffin of any of the “fellowshippe” was but half this sum.\*

The Twenty-third Rule makes known, once more, the fiscal exactions of the Company ; what amount of fine all wardens who were negligent of their duties had to pay, and also of all complaining parties who were not able to substantiate the validity of their charges.

This is the last Rule, according to the figure-numbering therewith given, though properly, there are three others, one

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\* In Shaw's most beautiful and expensive work, “The Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages,” a coloured engraving is given of the Pall of the old Sadlers Company of London, which is a most gorgeous article, so thickly embroidered as it is with silk and gold, and the pattern and clashing of colours looking so very rich.

that the company shall contribute yearly "to the pavinge of the streates" six shillings and eightpence ; another that it shall yearly give the eldest serjeant twelve pence ; and, finally, where the statute law itself comes in to assume its higher countervailing powers, as, thus, in the Ordinances at large, the same is expressed :—

" Provided allways that yf any ambiguitie, doubte or question shall hereafter happen to arryse vpon the takinge, construction, or meaninge of any Article, clause, or sentence conteyned in this presente booke ; or that any person or persons shall at any tyme hereafter complaine and declare themselves vnto the justices of assise of this County of Heref, for the tyme beinge, that they be vexed or troubled in body or goodes by the reson of these ordynances, or any of them, other than the lawes and statutes of thys realme they ought to be, either by the abusinge, misinterpreting, or mistakinge of these ordinances, or any of them. That then not only the same ambiguitie, doubt, or question to be from tyme to tyme discused, corrected, and reformed by the said justices of Assyse, withyn the said County of Heref, for the tyme beinge, but alsoe all the said ordinances, and every of them, by the discretion of the said Justice of Assise, to be utterly made frustrate and void, as to him or them shall seeme good."

And, now, having brought to a conclusion these observations, as illustrative of the various rules which have just been put under review, that something of the spirit and purpose of the age in which they originated, may be felt and understood by the general reader, I shall next proceed with the remaining few heads of my present task, to the end that the little which is to be added, may give the subject under consideration a partial look of completeness.



## No. VII.

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE MEMBERS, THE FIRST YEAR AFTER THE DATE OF THE ORDINANCES, OR IN 1570 ; WITH SOME REMARKS THEREON.

Having just examined the character of the laws and ordinances of this our ancient Company of Hereford Cordwainers, and thereby to the obtaining of some considerable insight into the nature and aim of the particular social confederacy under notice, the next best mode of procedure to take will, perhaps, be, to show the manner they had of recording and transacting their monetary and other general business matters ; and which, again, will serve as a sort of easy link-work to such further considerations as the nature of some of the facts elicited may demand, or as connected with the other developments of the general subject.

To this end, then, I shall now proceed to make such extracts as may seem necessary from the earliest portion of the oldest of the two books already spoken of, and as the same intention has been before expressed.

Among the other matter contained under the second head of these papers, is an account of the various monies obtained from different individuals and sources towards meeting the cost of the new "composition," or ordinance which the company had so lately procured. This was an expenditure made at the time, in 1569 ; and in the next year after, we have in the book referred to, a succinct record of the entire of both the first incomings and out-goings of the company in its then freshly modelled character. In this account the moneys received from "certen prentices,

accordinge to the order of the composition," is placed at the head of the folio page where it is found ; the number of these apprentices being eight in all, and who each pay two shillings ; but why only two shillings, when the ordinance on the subject says that the payment must be two shillings and *fourpence*, is something of a mystery, and perhaps is only to be unravelled by the very natural supposition that all these odd fourpences were allowed to be expended by the acting officer or officers who were called out on duty upon such occasions—for, as it was named, one of their "drinkinges," they claiming the solitary groat, and the larger sum going to the common-stock. The following is a specimen of one of these entries :—

"ITEM—resceaved of Robert humfrey, prentice with John Turner ... .. ijs."

Then comes another source of income in the "money resceaved of the fellowshippe or company for their Quartyredge."—The whole of this portion of the subject is as follows :—

"IMPRIMIS—resceaved of the masters for ther fyrste Quartyredge after the composytion ... ..	s. d.
ITEM—resceaved of the same companye for ther second Quartyredge ... ..	vij. liij.
ITEM—resceaved of the wardenes of the bochers* for the copie of our composytion ... ..	vij. liij.
ITEM—resceaved of Richarde heringes being the olde wardenet† ... ..	xij.
	ij. iiij.
Sume resceaved ... ..	xvijs."

\* Why the *butchers* of Hereford should be desirous of obtaining a "copie" of rules belonging to the trade of the shoemaker appears unaccountable, and the more so as it had to be paid for.

† This mention of Richard Hering being the "olde warden," in this first year of acting under the composition here spoken of, is another strong proof that the company had an earlier existence than from 1569.

The 18s., then, which is here so duly set forth, along with the 16s. had from the fees of apprentices, the 35s. 8d. obtained from the three individuals mentioned in page the 11th, as their joint payments for being admitted into the company, with the 4l. which was got together by loan, as stated in the 12th page, make up the whole of the receipts of the society during this the first year after its being remodelled.

The expenditure for the same year comes now to be noticed, or, as it is headed, "the Allowance demanded," by the warders; these being the parties who, along with their other duties, were the paying officers of the company. The whole of this statement it may, also, be necessary to give, because it is so fully explanatory of the way in which these, the most essential affairs of the body were transacted. This is it:—

"IMPRIMIS—for the swearing of the twoe	£	s.	d.
wardens att two tymes ... ..			xij.
ITEM—to the eldest sergeant for his fee ...			xij.
ITEM—spent upon the companie ... ..			xij.
ITEM—geven to a pore man of the companie ... ..			xij.
ITEM—paide for seale or signett... ..			xij.
ITEM—for the ingrossying of the composition ... ..		vij.	
ITEM—to Mr. Mathew geffres, being mayor, for the sealinge of the same ... ..		vj.	vij.
ITEM—for David Jones chardges to worcester aboute the composytion ... ..		v.	
ITEM—to Mr. hide, for makinge of presentment ... ..			xviiij.
ITEM—to Mr. havard, a quarte of Sacke ...			vj.
ITEM—to Mr. bevys Cartwright,* beinge			

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\* This Master Bevis Cartwright is mentioned in Price's list of Hereford mayors as being in office two years preceding the date

then mayer, and to the rest of hys	£	s.	d.
bretherne, for wyne to them ... ..			xx.
ITEM—to Mr. warner [for] a pottell of Sacke			xij.
ITEM—to the Justices of assisses for cor- rectyng of the composyion and for to putt theyr handes and seales therevnto...	iiij.	vi.	vij.
ITEM—layde out, to make that somme by order, ijs.			
ITEM—for paper and for the makinge of our accomptes ... ..			iiij.
ITEM—for the writing of the same Ac- compts... ..			vij.
ITEM—for the regesteringe of the compo- sytion in the rowle ... ..	iiij.	iiij.	

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The whole some to be allowed is ... vj. iiij. xv."

Such, then, are the two sides of these monetary concerns of the parties under notice, and most curious and interesting is not only the account in whole, but in many of its specialties. In it we find much of the workings of the state of society now nearly three hundred years back. In the first place, as connected with the income department, perhaps the fact that strikes upon the attention the strongest, is the one exhibited by the two-shilling tax placed upon the apprentice. He has to pay—even at the very threshold, as it may be termed, of his working life—so much to a society among whom he has neither station nor voice, nor can have for at least the next seven years; nor, possibly may never have, should he, after the expiration of his apprenticeship, still remain but the humble wages-worker, in his condition of journeyman or "servant." But, then, he might be other than this; and so, no doubt,

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of Master Geffrey's mayoralty, so, from this, it is evident that this affair of obtaining the new composition had been for a considerable time in progress.

the parties thus confederated, reasoned amongst themselves ; while, on the virtue of this reasoning, it was thought but right that the boy, or parents or guardians of the boy so engaging himself, should be made to pay to the company some money-acknowledgement, because of the mere chance of his future membership.

The Hereford Cordwainers, however, though in this particular following the usual custom of their own and other trades in other towns, were not so exacting in another case. This is in what was called "quarterage;" for though, as we may observe, they paid a quarterage themselves, there is nothing in their rules or their receipts to show that the journeyman had to pay quarterage as well, although one much less in amount. This was a custom in many places; but here the company seems to have never made any demand of the sort, or, probably, had found out, before the period under notice, that the Hereford "servant" was either too poor to pay any such, or too spirited to submit to it.—And, now, a few words on some of the paid items.

In the first item under the head of expenditure, is the outlay of a shilling for the swearing of the wardens. This, however, is said, to have been done at "twoe tymes," and hence the double charge, the "eldest serjeant," or sergeant at mace, whose duty it was to swear the wardens, having been given, for some cause or other not explained, a two-fold trouble. Another shilling is "spent upon the companie," as a "drinkinge"—for the wardens, no doubt; but, then, again, these wardens were not allowed to *drink* up all the shillings, for the very next disbursement is that of, "geven to a pore man of the companie, xijd;" the said disbursement proving two very important positions, the one, that, even in these "good old times," there were poor men to be found among the middle-class grade of society; and

other, that the shoemaker was really a good fellow, and not only could feel for, but would assist, the distressed of his own calling ; and that this was the case, there are numerous instances to be found in the written folios of the present book.

Following this payment "to a pore man," are ten heads of outlay as resulting from the new ordinances. So much for a "seale or signett," to sign, as we must suppose, in behalf of the Company, these ordinances ; so much to the acting mayor, Matthew Geffres, for his trouble of putting the corporation seal to the same piece of parchment ; while David Jones for going to Worcester, "aboute the composition," had five shillings awarded to him in compensation for his trouble. Master Hide executes a "presentment" in relation to the same business, and he has the modest reward of seventeenpence ; Master Havard is cherished with "a quarte of sacke," costing sixpence—though for what doing we are not told ; nor yet are we informed why Master Bevis Cartwright\* and "hys bretherne" had the heavy sum of twentypence laid out upon them "for wyne," which produced, probably, at least, a pleasant smack of the lips and a hearty "thank ye." Master Warner, too, is another among the fortunates—he has been favoured with a whole shilling's worth—"a pottell of sacke ;" and now, at last, even the gowned and wigged justices themselves

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\* This is the individual who is spoken of as the offended party, in the following interesting passage from Mr. Johnson's Lecture :—  
 "In the tenth year of Queen Elizabeth, one William Sheward was deprived of his franchise as a citizen for having grossly insulted Bevis Cartwright, Esq., the mayor, and his lady, the mayoress. The offences charged against Sheward were the making use of violent and improper language to the mayor and his lady, listening under the parlour window, peeping in at the window when the mayor was entertaining his friend, and breaking his ward at the Boothall, to which place he had been committed by the mayor."

come in for a share of the generosity of the sturdy shoemaker, when, merely, as it would seem, for the condescension of putting "theyr handes and seales" to the then virgin ordinances which had received their august approval, they greedily pocket no less a sum than four pounds six shillings and eightpence ; exacting, as it would appear, by the next entry, the full *six* shillings, though *two shillings* had to be "layde oute," or advanced by the party who had the misfortune to be the paymaster upon that occasion, to the end that the whole demand should be discharged. The men of law knew, therefore, in those early times, as well as at present, both the way to charge, and how to enforce the payment.

Three other items yet remain to be noticed—those of fourpence for the paper to make out the "accompts" upon ; twice fourpence for the scribe who executed the writing, and summing-up ; and the three shillings and fourpence, which was paid to the then Town Clerk, no doubt, "for regesteringe the composytion in the rowle ;" that is, for making a record, in some of the books belonging to his office, of the time and nature of these very ordinances, whose various powers and monetary history we have just been examining in the present and two preceding portions of these contributions, as exhibitivè of some of the characteristics of the civic or social life of by-gone ages.

## No. VIII.

THE OFFICERS AND BOOK-KEEPING OF THE  
COMPANY.

In the year 1570, the officers of the Company were Roger Cumberledge and Richard Herring, wardens; and William Hill, John Farrell, John Harper, and Lewis Appowell, the four associates; these being, no doubt, the same description of officers who, among, the tailors and other of the old London companies, were named assistants. The cordwainers of Hereford, it would seem, had no "master," as such—a sort of chief, or presiding head; but they had an under officer, and one whose services were, in all probability, still more essential to the due operations of the society—"Thomas Esque, the youngeste of the company being *bedell*." The above wardens, then, on the expiration of their year of office, in 1571, paid in to the "coffer" of the company, on the "yelding vp of their accompts," 36s. 8d., as one description of the income of the society; while other receipts, including those for the "paynted clothe" and "lytell oulde pawle," amounted in all to £3. 15s. 6d. One of these acknowledgments is thus particularised:—

"ITEM—resceaved of William Grene for hys

admittance ... .. iij*s*. iiij*d*." and which William Green, as is afterwards seen, becomes the *bedell* for the following year. The result of the tax, too, arising from fresh indentures, makes still a conspicuous figure in the receipts, though now the apprentice has set against his name the full amount of 2*s*. 4*d*., as

£3



stated in the article.\* It would seem from the many entries of this character, which are so regularly occurring in every income account, that Hereford in these early times must either have had a considerable reputation for its professors of "the gentle craft," or have experienced a somewhat extraordinary demand for new hands in the trade. On the first of May, 1570, William Davies takes as an apprentice, "Edward Taylor, the son of John taylor of Ledburye;" so, the same year, "Roger baker, the sonne of John baker, husbandman, of Sutton," is indentured to Lewis Appowell. Another is said to be of Clodock; and others of Madley, Weston, Credenhill, "Myeh Dewchurch," Burghill, Leominster, "Markell," "Presteigne," and even Caerleon; while, in the year 1573, James Wilcox takes as an apprentice a "Thomas Wright, the sonne of Thomas Wryght of ludloe in the co (unty) of Saloppe;" and which Thomas Wright, it is very probable, might be an ancestor of the very distinguished Thomas Wright, of our own times, a gentleman whose untiring research and erudite capacity have been made manifest in so many of the productions of his pen. And, likewise, the James Wilcox, here mentioned as being the master of Thomas Wright, of Ludlow, may have his descendants in two old men, shoemakers and brothers, who are even now members of the company. The ancient and highly respectable names of Scudamore and Hoskyns are also found in connection with the trade, as thus, in one instance, where both are mentioned in the same entry:—"John Hoskyns Apprentice with hugne Skvdmore, whose

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\* The four-pence here alluded to seems to have been added to the two shillings, as payment for what is called "recording" the service of the apprentice; and was, no doubt, regularly paid over to the party who made this record, while the greater sum went to the common stock of the company.

Indentvres berethe date the xvijth Daye of novembere, in the xxvijth yere of the Quenes majesties Rayne that now is ;" and which entry, too, will show the usual style of record employed on these occasions. And two years before this, the same "hughe scudmore" as the name is now written, takes as an apprentice one "Roberte Morgane;" Hugh, in this case, being said to be "of the cytye," as all these masters were, though doubtless there was some special reason for the wardens to have his identity noted in the way it here is, to distinguish him, perhaps, from some other Hugh Scudamore, who might have been not so gratefully known, but as a "foren," who attended the markets of the city, and sold cheaper.

As the Company, therefore, as may be discovered from these particulars, kept thus progressing so flourishly, so the same fact is as plainly testified in another class of entries. From the first all seems to have gone on successfully, for in 1569, those different parties who had advanced their monies to assist in the securing of the "composition"—in meeting some of those heavy demands before stated and commented on, especially such as were charged by the Judges—were now full and honestly repaid ; and as the following transcriptions will, in great part show :—

	a.	d.
"ITEM—payde to John poininge for the money by him Lente to the companie for the ob- tayninge of the composytion ... ..	xij.	iiij.
ITEM—to Roger Cumberledge for money Lent by him ... ..	iiij.	iiij.
ITEM—to Lewis Appowell ... ..	x.	
ITEM—Layde oute for the companie whan the [they, the wardens] remytted the boke of the money Lente towards the said composy- tion ... ..		ij."

Thus, these debts, were rapidly cleared off ; and now appears, in the same page, two other heads which are worthy of being noticed :—

“ ITEM—for this our boke of Register, boughte

at London ... .. ijs. vjd. ;”

that is, that the very manuscript book from whence the writer is now taking these different extracts, is, thus, still in existence, and cost when “boughte in London” two shillings ! But, why bought ‘in London, or by whom ? of either, there is no information. Was there, at this time, no such paper book to be had in Hereford—here in this old cathedral city ? This can hardly be maintained ; though the circumstance of such a special notification may well enough give rise to a surmise of this nature. The distance was too far to either send or go for the mere object of cheapness—no bookseller at this time, nor even till very lately, having his weekly or monthly parcel from the metropolis. The most feasible presumption, notwithstanding, seems to be that such a book could *only* be had in London, and so it was bought “att” London, but by whom ? or how conveyed to the parties in need of it, is not now even to be guessed ?

The other entry relates to the same book as thus :—

“ ITEM—to John gibbons for makinge and

kepinge of our boke for the yere... .. vs. iiijd.”

The fact here gathered is important—important in the proof it affords of what we now would call the commonest acquirements of the humblest boy or girl Sunday-school goer,—the power to read and write. Somebody, not a shoemaker—not one of themselves—some learned namesake, perhaps,—a forefather of the author of our most splendid and popular Roman History,—had the commission of “making” up, or of balancing and recording, the monetary

concerns of these cordwainers, and thus to become their book-keeper.

This subject, the mere capacity to read and write, is well worthy, at this place, if some further illustration and remark, as one which is so interestingly exhibitiv of the great differences between the state of society in the reign of the virgin Queen Elizabeth and our now mother Queen Victoria ; for fact itself—no matter of what nature it may be—is quite as valueless as fiction without we accustom ourselves to use it as the great agent of our reflective powers, and thus to become really wiser as concerns the past and the present ; and, as another fortunate consequence, the more far-seeing and hopeful in regard to the future.

These cordwainers, then, at the period now under consideration, could not keep their own accounts, and this although they were master-men, or the highest of their class ; some of them, no doubt, being in the possession of considerable worldly well-doing, and none of them but such as at present would be called “respectable”—making, in short, one of the then necessarily competent parts of the “middle classes” of English society. The reader in going through these pages ought not, therefore ever to loose sight of this way of applying such information—humble-conditioned, and hitherto unnoticed and unregarded as it may be—to its legitimate purposes ; that is, of making himself really better informed of the broader and deeper workings of our social progress as a whole, than can be obtained from the much more prominent and accustomary sources of history. How the hero fought and conquered we learn in every quarter ; while, how the humbler man tried and struggled and went on in his career of uncheered and unvalued industry, we find few or no books

about—but the whole, in general, a black. Even these master-tradesmen of their age—these cordwainers, as has been observed—could not, in the general ignorance which beset their condition some two or three hundred years ago,—could not make of themselves the commonest record of their every-day doings. To accomplish this much, they had to be dependent on others; on some one of the “learned,” as learning then went, for making the necessary debtor and creditor pen-and-ink display of their proceedings, now employing one, and now some other welcome hand. That this was their position seems very evident from the facts to be adduced from their own book and about their own concerns, and in proof of which I shall now proceed to give some examples, and which examples, too, may otherwise help on the general purpose proposed in writing these papers.

In the same year are these three entries:—

- 1573.—“gevyngne to John Belers for Writinge  
of our booke of ordynances..... xijd.  
— “payd to John Belers for makynge the  
petycion..... xijd.  
— “for the writinge of our accompts ..... xijd.”

And, again, through other years are these different particulars:—

- 1575.—“payd for the makynge and wrytinge and  
castynge our accompts ..... xijd.  
1576.—“Layde out for Rittinge of our accompts... xd.  
1578.—“payd for the makynge of the accompts..... xiiid.  
1579.—“paide for the makynge of a letter to be  
carried to lemester and to other places,  
to the shomakers there ..... liiijd.  
1582.—“payd to John garway for wrythyng the  
notes that came from glocester..... ijd.”

In 1584, another twopence is expended on “waxe and papr;” while, in 1589, a much larger purchase in stationery

is made, 18d. being paid "for a newe boke of paper;" and after which we are told the purpose of this "newe boke," as thus:—

"for the copyinge houte of the ould boke..... ijs."

In 1598, 2s. is paid "for makying 3 letters to londone;" and, in the same year, the "accompts" being longer than usual, the charge seems, in consequence, to be advanced, and 18d. paid for the work. "Master Clarke," just before this, has the modest allowance of 6d. 'for makinge out Bills;' and now, again, in the same very important business year of 1598, is this very interesting notice as connected with a name well known to those who are conversant with our early literature:—

"ITEM—paid to John Davis for makinge our

petytione ... .. ijs. vjd.;"

This, John Davis, being not only the author of a now exceedingly rare and highly-prized and priced-volume of epigrams and other poetical pieces, but a most famous "writer" in the strictest sense of the word. John Davis, it is said, in a book called the "Anglorum Speculum, or the Worthies of England in Church and State," 1684, (p. 382.) "Jno. Davis, of Hereford, was the great Master of the Pen in England, for *fast, fair, close, and various* writing; and could flourish with his fancy (in poetry) as well as with his pen. He died in the midst of the reign of King James."\*

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\* In Brayley and Britton's Herefordshire, p. 497, is the following fuller account of this "petition-writer" for the shoemaker:—

"John Davies, a celebrated penman, was engaged as Writing Master to Henry, Prince of Wales, son of James the First. 'In skill and the acquirement of his profession, he had no competitor, being equally eminent in copying the various hands then in use, and particularly distinguished by an extraordinary quickness in writing the running hand.' It is recorded by Grainger, that his characters were so small as to require a magnifying glass to read them; and Fuller observes they were so correct, that it required

A singular proof of the estimation in which the performances of this pen-man, or writing-master, was held in his day, is very noticeable in the transcript just made about the petition, which he wrote out for the company. By this, we learn that he charged 2s. 6d. for executing the said, no doubt, splendid specimen of his ability ; while the John Belers, who, in 1573, was entrusted to prepare another petition, probably having reference to the composition, had paid to him only one shilling,—perfection in those days, as in our own, still securing the higher remuneration.

And, again, we find another scribe employed, but a few years before, of the same name, and, possibly, a relation, or the father of the greater Davis:—

1592.—“ITEM—to hary Daveys, for writinge

the booke... .. xxd.”

Also, to John Gibbon, or, as it may be, the son of the “John gibbons” already mentioned as being the book-keeper of the company in 1571, is thus, once more, noticed in two places, in the accounts of the year 1604.

“paide to John gibbins, for writinge of fower letters to Ludlowe, Bristowe, worcester, and Rosse... ..	s.	d.
		iiij.
“payde to John Gibbons for writinge of twoe letters... ..		vj.
“spent the same daye at John Philpotes house... ..		xij.

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some time to decide whether they were written or printed. He died at London, in the year 1610. Richard Gerhinge was a scholar of Davies's, and was said to excel him in all the branches of the art. The quaint Fuller, in his commemoration of these artists, has advanced into a strain of hyperbolism, not easily to be paralleled. ‘I am sure,’ says the writer, ‘that when two such transcendant pen-masters shall again be born in the same shire, they may ever serve fairly to engross the will and testament of the expiring universe.’”

"geven unto my man\* to bringe the letters  
to Gloucester ... .. xvjd."

This last "item" deserves some little notice. By it, we see, that 244 years ago, sixteen-pence was considered sufficient pay for a messenger to go a journey of 60 miles—from Hereford to Gloucester and back, and that, too, in the then enormously bad state of the roads. Nor, probably, was this all. He would have to delay, at all events, one night in Gloucester, even supposing him to be qualified for walking more than 30 miles in the day, on both days successively, and with no other business to transact, but to deliver his letters, find a bed, get up next morning, and return. Much more than this was, doubtlessly, required. The letters he was the bearer of would need answers,—for the business was special and urgent; while, to obtain such answers would require some waste of time, a day, at least, if not two; and thus, as it might be, for the loss of four whole days of his usual labour, he had for his travelling expenses—including the cost of bed and his eating—but fourpence for day and night.

But, now, to turn to the stricter subject under notice—the adducing of some further proofs of the inability of the members of the company to keep their own accounts; and these proofs, as the old saying has it, are as plentiful as blackberries in their proper season. As with the first recorded notice about John Gibbons's salary for "makinge and keepinge the boke for the yere," so, a similar form of entry is observable in tracing the whole of the accounts—accounts, going over, in all, as concerns this particular "boke," the long space of nearly eighty years. John Kins-

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\*A journeyman, no doubt, of the chief warden; while the two letters mentioned, seem to have been both destined for parties in Gloucester.



ley, a person, as it would appear, who must have been either connected with the city corporation or the church, most likely the latter,—was the book-keeper of the company for a considerable period, his name being first mentioned in 1606, as the recipient of the modest sum of six-pence “for Ringinge for the good wiffe wilcoxe ;” that is, for pulling the cords of the doleful funeral bell ; while, in 1610 and 1611, he is thus mentioned again :—

“ITEM—geven to John Kinsley, for writinge	s.	d.
some of our ordinances ... ..		xxij.
ITEM—geven to John Kinsley, for keeping		
our booke ... ..		x.”

And so on, though at different times the amount of his payment greatly varies, as in the following instances are shewn :—

1613.—“payd to John Kinsly, for keepinge	s.	d.
our booke for the last year ... ..		xij.
1614.—“paide John Kinsley, for makinge oure		
acompts, and writinge the ordinances, and		
keepinge the booke ... ..	ij.	
1615.—“to John Kinslye, for this yere ... ..		x.
1616.—“payde to John Kinsley, for his half		
year’s wages ... ..	v.	

The difference between the small sum of ten-pence, accorded as the reward for John Kinsley’s scholarly services in 1615, and the five shillings which he obtained “for his half year’s wages,” in 1616, is very remarkable ; and can only be accounted for on the supposition that he had been engaged in many other duties for the company during the latter year, or rather its “half”—for no other half-year’s payment is stated in the same or any future account. A shilling is the usual sum paid at this period “for keepinge the booke ;” while about ten years after, or in 1626, and thence out, an advance is made to two shillings,

with the addition of a pair of boots, as, thus, for the first time, in 1632:—

“IREM—to the Clarke of our Companye, a paire of  
bootes ... .. vijs.

I find also, in two documents, one dated 1628, and the other 1635, a further proof that the company were still under the necessity of keeping a “clarke”; for in these instruments,—purporting to have been signed by the whole of the members, who were then nearly forty in number,—all the names are written by the one hand; and although such evidence may not be altogether a full proof that none of these parties *could* write, yet does it seem very probable that but few, at best, could do so, and hence it might have been considered the better and less invidious way for some one hand to go through all the labour, and the more especially as such signatures were required rather as a matter of form than for any purpose of legal confirmation.

## No. IX.

## CONCLUDING EXTRACTS AND OBSERVATIONS.

PAVING RATE OF 1549 ; AND PAYMENTS TO THE LORDS  
PRESIDENTS, PLAYERS, AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

I find I must now proceed to a finish of these articles, which have grown under my hand to a much greater size than I had at first anticipated ; the peculiarly suggestive character of the extracts given, along with the comment thereby elicited, being such as to have led me on from paper to paper, at once so imperceptibly and compulsory, that I could not, in any justice to the matter I had undertaken to claim some small share of public attention towards, find an earlier opportunity than the one I am thus about to embrace. And yet the subject, as a whole, is far from being completed ; for the quarry, as it were, has only been opened—the surface of the ground no more than broken—and the crust of the legitimate material but merely glanced at, so pregnantly plentiful is the deeper depths of the strata, still untouched, in its information of those strange varieties of the fossilised relics of the former condition of the social life of the English tradesman, of which the reader has here seen a few samples.

At some other time, however, a further and more satisfying advance may be made ; and with this hope and expectation, I feel the less regret in pushing on to a rapid conclusion the present performance. In such few extracts, then, as are now about to be added from the same manuscript book which has already been found, in this way, so

fertile, it shall be my object to chose only those which may be made more immediately illustrative of the general societarian or civic life of the inhabitants of Hereford, than of the Shoemaker of Hereford in his own distinct isolation.

To this end, I would, therefore, now, in the first place, beg to recall the mind of the reader to that which is said in one part of the matter placed under the head of the 23rd rule, in regard to the Company being called upon to pay its due share of the then paving-rate of the city. In this it is said, "And the felowshippe doth graunte yerely to the pavinge of the streates vjs. viijd." Aye, to the paving of the streets ! and for nothing else.

Some little time ago, on mentioning this circumstance to a gentleman in Hereford—and not merely a gentleman in his means and position, but in the extent of his general knowledge—he expressed much doubt about such being the fact ; and said he thought I must have either mistaken the phraseology, or the meaning of this phraseology, in the document spoken of, or the time of its date ; and in the latter view of the subject, to a very strange degree. Such a fact, he continued, would seem to show the then existence of some sort of street commissionership similar to what we have at present ; though, he added, this could not have been, for it is well known that Hereford, even in the memory of some old people still living, had scarcely a street which could be said to have been paved, and among these were several of our most public thoroughfares, as in the lower portions of St. Owen's-street and King-street. These were his opinions on the matter ; but how erroneous, the very distinct wording of the rule which has been quoted, fully discovers ; while the records of the Company, in an abundance of instances, are equally as disproving, where the 6s. 8d. mentioned in the rule, as this payment

can be shown to be made, from year to year, is called the "city's annuities;" being the demand of the greater upon the lesser corporation, and as, likewise, upon all the other trade companies then existing, according to the differences in their circumstances. It is fortunate in adducing this fact, that the word "paving" is so unmistakeably used, and the more so, as it is not so used in that portion of the larger ordinances embracing this subject, though the abridged rules were written, if not in the same, at least in the next following, year, as the position given them in the book plainly enough shows. In the larger ordinances, after a statement is made of some of the fiscal advantages which the Judges of Assize, who sanctioned the document, had guaranteed to the Company, it is written, and for "which grauntes the said artificers doe freely graunte vnto the vse of the said cittie the some of vjs. viijd. sterlinge, yerely to be paid vnto the said hands of the collectors of annuyties of crafts and occupations in the cytty of Heref.;, at the feaste of the Annunciacion of our Lady the Virgin, only and within one moneth then next ensuinge."

Now, as thus worded, what do we learn from the passage extracted? We get to know, certainly, that the city, at this time, had a class of officers, who were called collectors of annuities; and the cordwainers' share of this charge was 6s. 8d.; but why any such collection should be made, or for what purpose, there is nothing whatever made known. But here the abridged clause explains all the difficulty. The money was required for paving the streets, and in this sense, it was not only so understood, but the thing was so expressed. It is said in a volume now lying beside me,\* "About the same time (reign of Henry VIII.), began the

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\* The Pictorial History of England.

*We require to be told that the highway described was in the time in question not a street, but a suburban road, partially lined with buildings; we think it scarcely possible that the narrow streets of the city itself could at any period have been maintained without some kind of pavement. Street-pavements of the Roman era have been uncovered in London & it may be concluded that in all subsequent ages the like indispensable assistance to internal communication was in use.*

paving of the streets of London, the first act for that purpose being the statute 24 Henry viii., c. 11, passed in 1532-3, 'for paving the high-way between the Strand Cross and Charing Cross.'” Thus, then, this very important feature in social improvement was no sooner seen to exhibit itself in London, than it found an imitation in Hereford, for although the date of the cordwainers' ordinances may seem to place this imitation at 36 years' distance from the passing of the statute just mentioned, yet this agreement or regulation about the so-called “annuities” had a much earlier origin. In 1549, twenty years before the birth of the ordinances, and but sixteen years after the time of the London act, the governing authorities of Hereford, originated—as I find by the “Great Black Book”—the identical local law under which this general pavement rate had its existence. In this, it is said, that “fforasmuche as ther was before thys tyme Dyvers corporacions of Artiffycers, craftes, and occupacions in the sayd cytty who were bounde by the grante of their corporacions yerelye to bryng fforth and sett forward Dyvers pageauntts of Auncyentt historyes in the processions in the sayde Cytty vpon the Day and ffeast of Corpus Xti [Christi], which nowe ys and are omytted and surceased, whereof it ys Agreed, condescended, and granted that all and everye of the sayd craftes and corporacions shall in stede and place of the settinge fforthe of the sayd pageauntts on the sayd daye or ffeast of Corpes Xti, yerelye consente to pay Att the ffeaste of the Annuncyacion of our Ladye the vyrgene, one Annuyte or certen some of monye to the vse and behoffe of the sayd Cytey;” and all of which monies were to be “Distributed, Despensed, and Bestowed in and vppon the Ruynowes and decayed cawseys, pauements, walls, and castying of the

*Even the causeway between the Strand & Charing Cross had probably been a causeway for many centuries before it was controlled by Act of Parliament. And a little enquiry into the Patent Rolls, or in the Rolls of Parliament, would obtain many Memorials of the paving of Cities & Towns long before the reign of Henry VIII in most cases be it remembered, a renewal of former works, not marking the date of a great invention or improvement. (Ld Mag Aug 1648 p. 174)*

Town Dyches, or pore peple in the sayd Cytey of hereford."\*

Here, therefore, we learn not only the full meaning of the term "annuities," standing as it does so lonely-like and unexplained in the payments of the Cordwainers, but also the reason of the obligation being inserted in the ordinances of 1569, and even to the exact specification of the time when these dues were demandable, and in the same phraseology—"at the feaste of the Annunciacion of our ladye the virgin."

A few of the entries, in relation to these "annuities," for the "pavinge of the streates," as selected indifferently, are as follows. In the first instance given, the 6s. 8d. is stated to be paid to some person whose name is not in the list of mayors for either that particular or any other year; while, again, in 1578, a Thomas Maylord is made to be the receiving party, though James Warnecomb was the chief officer for this year, a John Maylord, according to Duncomb, being the mayor in 1574. The fact, notwithstand-

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\* In the early part of the 16th century, says the authority quoted in the text, the first act "for paving the streets of London was passed;" but, then, was there no pavement in London before 1533? This is not to be supposed; and the more especially in the then London proper—the city, as now called. An Act was made for paving Bristol considerably prior in time to what is thus said of London—in the 3rd of Henry VII.; while it is stated in Duncomb, that in the 19th Edward II., "the citizens of Hereford had a license granted them to dig stone in the king's forest of Hay [and the place is still called Haywood, being about three miles distant] near Hereford, for the repair of the walls and pavements." (v. 1, p. 242.) It is true the act passed by the Legislature concerning the paving of Hereford, is but modern, dated but in 1774; and also, true it is, that in the preamble to this act, "the streets, lanes, and passages" are said to have been kept in bad condition, "the expenses of repairing the same being sustained by different persons." Just so. Perhaps by the parishes in their separate jurisdictions; having, at best, but a loose and vaguely-directed authority; and such few trades as still paid their "annuities," paying these now but as matter of custom, and not as a general paving rate for the city.

ing, is still the same, as regards the fulfilment of the condition under notice,—a condition arranged and agreed to in 1549, and as continued and again sanctioned in 1569. Or, the thing may be explained by supposing that John Harp and *Thomas Maylord* had been the parties employed in getting the money in, and being such, their names might so be given, in place of “payd to the collectors,” as in the second instance will be read :—

	s.	d.
1571. “Item—to John harp ... ..	vj.	vijj.
1576. “payd to the collectors of the Annualities of the Cytye... ..	vj.	vijj.
1577. “payd for our Annualities ... ..	vj.	vijj.
1578. “paide for our annultyes to Thomas Maylord ... ..	vj.	vijj.
1594. “payd for our newelties ... ..	vj.	vijj.
1600. “paid for our nuelty ... ..	vj.	vijj.
1601. “payde to Mr. Maior for our newelties	vj.	vijj.
1602. “paid to Mr. Thomas Clarke mayor for the tyme beinge ... ..	vj.	vijj.
1611.* “payde to Mr. Crump being mayor...	vj.	vijj.”

In another year, the payment is 13s. 4d. ; this doubled sum marking, no doubt, some preceding deficiency ; and thus showing that credit in those days, as in our own, was not only required, but was permitted, and this, too, in direct disregard of that part of the ordinance which states that every such payment should be made “within,” at most, “one month” from the “feaste of the Annunciacion.”

Nor, was it alone, in the instance of this paving rate, that the company of cordwainers' and the other companies were obliged to make any such payment towards the general demand of the city, for on these bodies devolved almost the whole of the responsibility of finding whatever

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\* It should be made known, that the date in these and all the other instances given from the same accounts, refers to the person who was mayor, or the circumstance, of the preceding year.



might be wanted to meet either any of its customary or occasional expenses. A curious proof of this is discoverable in the two extracts I am now about to give ; and relating as they do to a very distinguished personage of these times—the Lord President of the Welsh Marches—their interest becomes the greater.

This office is said to have been of Norman origin ; and in the first term of dignity by which it was recognised, was the cause of the introduction (long afterwards, in the reign of Richard II), of the title of Marquis in our language ; these governors of the Marches—or such districts as were then looked upon as the Welsh-border lands, including those parts of the present county of Hereford called Ewyas-Lacy, Ewayas-Harold, Clifford, Winforton, Wigmore, Huntington, and other places—being styled *Marchiones Wallie*. In the reign of Edward I, in conjunction with a considerable abridgement of the powers of this great office, the style by which it was held was changed to that of Lord President ; while the castle of Ludlow, from the reign of Edward IV., became the chief court or judicial place of assembly for the transacting of all its business affairs, and which was there continued, till 1688, when the office and all its appendages were thenceforth abolished.

One of these high officers, then—who, in this instance, was no less a person than Sir Henry Sidney, the father of the still more distinguished Sir Phillip Sidney—came, it appears, to Hereford in the year 1671, for in the account made up in the following year, is this entry:—  
 “ITEM.—“ Given by consente of the companie to John Gryffthe, persuviant to the Lorde Presydente of the Marshes ... .. xviiiid.”  
 Sir Henry, at this time, had held the office of Lord

President for eleven years, and continued in the same six years longer, or until 1577, when he was sent to undertake the greater duties of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. In 1780, having been recalled from Ireland, he was now re-appointed to the Presidency, and then held it until the time of his death, in 1586, when he was succeeded by his son-in-law, the Earl of Pembroke; and Pembroke dying in 1601, the next who filled the office was Edward Lord Zouch. It was this latter-named nobleman, therefore, who is mentioned in the other extract, here adduced :—

1602.—“ Geven towards the guyste that was geven vnto  
the Lorde presidente..... xs.”

*guyste*

This “guyste” was, no doubt, some grand entertainment which the city authorities made in honour of the new President, when, probably, he was on his way to Ludlow to assume the first active duties of his appointment ; and if we but consider that at this time there were about twenty of these companies in all, who each had to pay their ten, fifteen, or twenty shillings, or, as it may have been, but five shillings, towards the same object, it may well be surmised that such a “banket”—for so these sorts of entertainments were generally at this period called—was of a very plentiful and choice description, abounding in all sorts of flesh-meat—the buck included—fish, capons, the most expensive of wines, and being cheered on and concluded amidst the ravishing “noises” of “musicians” and the bewildering flare of innumerable torches. Old Chaucer, in his *Canterbury Tales*, takes upon himself to censure the great “abusion,” as he terms it, which marked these festive doings of our ancestors ; the “excesse of divers meates and drinkes” which was included in, and also, the “too great preciousnesse of vesiell, and curiosite of minstrelcoie,” which

accompanied the more substantial part of the enjoyment. The presence of the minstrel or musician was, indeed, never neglected ; and even the humble cordwainers themselves, as numerous passages in their records testify, had, too, *their* dispensers of "sweet sound," to add to the usual pleasures of the festive dinner or supper-table. And why not ? seeing that, cordwainers though they were, they were neither thus niggard on the point of their own good-fellowship, nor, as regarded such assistance as they could afford to the "banketing" of either a Lord President or a Royal Prince ! In 1609, just seven days after the company had been called upon for their quota towards entertaining the Lord Zouch, Prince Henry, as it would seem (though not one of our Hereford history books have noticed the matter), arrives in the city ; and he comes, too, in state, for the young prince, although he was now but 15 years of age, had his own special household establishment—stewards, sewers, cooks, tailors, and a variety of other retainers and servants—including (of course) the "prince's players." And to these very "players" the Hereford cordwainers now show, as in the foregoing case they did to the Lord President, a specimen of their generosity ; and although it appears they acted, in this case, not altogether voluntarily—but at the "*request* of Master Mayor," still as the money was actually paid, and amounting as it did to the then not very inconsiderable gift of five shillings, the full half of the sum that was bestowed on the Lord President himself, the beneficence is equally noticeable ; and to us, living in these later times of the ultra radicalism of the trade, offers a very remarkable example of change and contrast. The "item" thus introduced is as follows :—

"Given to the princes players at the requeste of

Mr. Mayor ... .. vs."

Stow, writing in, and speaking of, the reign of Queen Elizabeth, says that the players, who in "former time were very poore and ignorant, in respect of these of this time, being now growne very skilfull and exquisite actors for all matters, they were entered into the service of divers great lordes, out of which companies there were twelve of the best chosen, and at the request of Sir Francis Walsingham they weresworne the queenesservants, and were allowed wages and liveries, as grooms of the chamber: and untill this year 1583, the queene had no players." (*Chronicles.*) The queen had no "players;" and, yet, it is certain that a much earlier queen had her "minstrels," and the king, too, his minstrels; and even the prince, their son, his *players*. This was in 1495, when the then monarch, Henry the Seventh, his Queen, and Prince Arthur, the heir apparent, being at Shrewsbury, during the festival of St. George, they were sumptuously provided for and entertained on that occasion, and at which time some of the heads of the expenditure were these:—"Given to the minstrels, 6s. 8d." "To the king's minstrels £1. 0s. 0d." "To the queen's minstrels 10s." "To the prince's players 6s. 8d." "To the Earl of Derby's players 6s. 8d." "To the Earl of Shrewsbury's players 10s."\* From all of which we see, that such gifts, and to such people, were not only put in practice by the cordwainers of Hereford in 1602, but that it had been customary to do so in other places, and, no doubt, through the same means of a common subscription, upwards of a hundred years before the coming of the then eldest son of James I. to this city.

I shall now, in addition to these slight glances at a few of the peculiarities of the general character of our civic

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\* History of Shrewsbury, 1810, p. 40.

These players were not travelling in the Prince's train, they were merely a company which had received permission to ball themselves by the Prince's name, a practice which has been fully illustrated in the pages of our dramatic historian, Mr J. P. Collier. The *7 Days* is a new ship for years & the word "guyote" in p. 109 is nothing more than "guyote", gift. Gent Mag Aug 1848 p 175.

institutions in former times, conclude with one or two other extracts of a similar bearing, and accompanied, as usual, with a little illustrative remark or explanation.

As we have just, therefore, seen how the purse of the cordwainer was so regularly placed in subservience, for not only keeping the streets of his native city in good walking order, but as also to assist in manifesting such of the then common generousities and blandishments of life as might be required on the visits of lords presidents, or judges (for judges, too, had to be provided for through the same means), and even "players", it comes now to be shown that still another claim was made upon the contents of the same purse, in the proud or desperate event of any of the city representatives taking their departure for the People's House of Parliament.

No "property qualification" and "payment of members" are two of the chief stipulations in the creed of that now large and energetic sect of politicians, who are principally to be found among the working classes, called Chartists; and in the extracts to be given, this so much-talked-of Andrew Marvel *desideratum*, will be found to have a Hereford as well as a Hull precedent and authority.

On the 23rd of the reign of Edward I., says Duncomb (vol. 1, p. 348), "Hereford first sent members to Parliament"; and when, he adds, quoting from a MS. of the famous collector and antiquarian writer, Thomas Hearne, "the expense was half levied on the inhabitants within the king's fee, and the other half within the bishop's, canons', and St. John's fee." This was in the early part of the 14th century; and now I am about to show, though all is densely dark concerning the "Parliamentary History" of Hereford, in regard to this paying part of the matter,

for nearly three centuries after, still, at last, a glimpse of the old fact appears, as discovered in these humble records of the cordwainer. The extracts which afford these glimpses are here, then, placed in the order of their dates before the reader; the two first, as will be seen, belonging to the reign of Elizabeth, and the third to that of James.

s. d.

1585. "ITEM—geven vnto the Burgestes of  
the parlymente ... .. ij. iiij.  
1593. "ITEM—payd for wyne geven to the  
bergysts ... .. ij. iiij.  
1604. "ITEM—geven to mr. hoskyns at his  
goinge towards the p'liament ... v.  
— "at that tyme spent in wyne and sugar ij. vi."

What, then, is to be gathered from these entries, few as they are, but that they exhibit, at least, a very remarkable exemplification of some of the lingering remains of the old half-and-half custom of paying the parliamentary burgess, as jointly agreed to in the time of Edward I., by the lay and religious authorities of the city? This, certainly, is the fact that must attract the notice of every reader; and, the more especially, in the last-given item, and its subservient companion one. By this we learn the full and distinct truth, that money had been paid to Master Hoskyns upon his "goinge" to Parliament, as well as the usual two shillings worth of wine given him, with the addition of twopence, in the pence, as marking, probably, the greater esteem for the man and his services; or, merely, because the quantity of wine which was either usually purchased for such an occasion, or so calculated to be purchased, had become this twopence dearer in the year 1604, to what the same quantity could be obtained for eleven or nineteen years before.

In the first of the years to which these extracts refer,

Gregory Price and James Ball were the two city members; and in the second instance, Gregory Price, again, and Thomas Mailerd, as this name is now printed in both Price and Duncomb; while in 1603, the year when the choice was made of John Hoskyns—or Serjeant Hoskyns, as was his more common and celebrated cognomen\*—his fellow member was a Walter Hardman, and had been elected to the same honour in the two immediately preceding parliaments; and yet, notwithstanding this seemingly high favour in which he was held, Hoskyns got both money and wine, while he, as it would seem, had no more than mere thanks—even if he had these. Something, however, may be in all this which is not at present to be clearly seen through. To a certain number of companies, or any other arrangement among the freemen at large, a proportionate share of the expense might be awarded; Hardman to be remunerated by one ten of these companies, and Hoskyns by the other, or in any different way that might be agreed on, and thus as these payments were allotted to be, so would they be marked down in the accounts books of the several interests concerned.

It is likely, too, that the colleague of Hoskyns, in this case, as in another which I am just about to adduce, was

\* Price calls him (History of Hereford, p. 248) "the ingenious Serjeant Hoskyns, who entertained King James with the dance of aged people;" while he is still more flatteringly spoken of in that much higher authority, the *Pictorial History of England*, as "Serjeant Hoskins, the scholar, poet, wit, and critic, the admired of Camden, Selden, Daniel, the friend and polisher of Ben Jonson, (and one) of the distinguished co-mates of Raleigh." (v. 3. p. 72.) This, then, was the man, who, as will soon be seen in the text, had been employed by shoemakers to write their letters, and who had a portion of his parliamentary pay subscribed by shoemakers. "Some say," writes Lord Campbell, in his "Lives of the Lord Chancellors," "that Andrew Marvel was regularly paid his wages as long as he served for Hull, but I believe he only received from his constituency yearly a complimentary cask of herrings." If so, Hoskyns was much better done by in Hereford, where he received both wine and money.

We would ask whether the payment was not continued by the larger towns to Lawyers, who by reason of their professional talent, might be considered the most efficient advocates of local interests, after it had been abandoned in the greater majority of cases, on the townsman ceasing to send to Parliament persons of their own

much less interested in the pay than in the honour of his parliamentary position. This is very possible: he might have been wealthy enough to satisfy all his desires as concerns the grosser affairs of life; while Hoskyns, being a shrewd, clever, and hard-working lawyer, thought he had no right to bestow so much of his valuable time in watching over, and in advocating the interests of others, to his own loss. And that this seems really to have been the fact, the following very interesting notice, printed in Mr. Johnson's Lecture, as taken from the Great Black Book, from which some previous excerpts have been given in these pages, plainly shows. By this it will be found, that the same John Hoskyns, who, in 1603, was first chosen to be one of the Representatives of Hereford in Parliament, and again, in 1614, chosen the second time, was now, four years after, when no longer a member, put to the necessity of urging his claims upon his late constituency in some manner, which, as it seems, was effective enough to produce the following arrangement towards the payment of his parliamentary wages for the "*nine hundred and odd days*," for which they stood his debtor. This is the passage:—  
 "March 30th, 1618.—It was ordered by Philip Symonds, Esq., Mayor, and the major part of the Common Council of the said City of Hereford, that they of the Common Council, every of them within their Wards, with some others, shall assess their Wards with a double tax for satisfying of John Hoskyns, Esqre., late one of the Burgesses of the Parliament for the same City, of £92, allowed him by the King's Writ, now in the Sheriff's, for his Parliament expenses for nine hundred and odd days, after the rate of 2s. per diem."

This Serjeant Hoskyns, who had thus so trustingly allowed such a heavy amount as "*nine hundred and odd*

*body, prevailing themselves instead of volunteers from the neighbouring gentry, or the nominal of powerful noblemen. (Gent. Mag. Aug 1848 / 176.)*



days' to be scored up to the credit of the citizens of Hereford, had been employed, in the mere capacity, as it would seem, of a legal scribe, by the cordwainers' company, in the year of his first being sent to Parliament. In this year he was paid 6d. "for writing a letter to Gloucester"; and which rate of remuneration, provided he had plenty of such letter-writing, would surely have produced him much more than his now meagre looking parliamentary salary of two shillings per day.

These disclosures offer, then, on the whole, the means of a somewhat novel retrospect. In the first number of the present papers, we found a few humble tradesmen meeting together, as their forefathers had been accustomed for many centuries; and yet, they knew not why they did so?—why it was they were a *company*?—or when, or how they came thus to assemble from year to year, or at any particular juncture? They had even no knowledge of either the age or character of their own documents. Of all these matters they were ignorant. Their meetings had become a mere traditionary observance, and awoke no other concern than the certainty of a good dinner and some friendly conversation. They had still, it is true, their trade-flag, the one which they yet have, being the gift of the Duke of Norfolk, of about half a century ago, at a time when, no doubt, for election purposes, he had himself enrolled as a member of the company. One or two of the oldest members remember and can tell of this; how his Grace was seen to put on, for the occasion, a leathern apron, which being tied about his loins in the proper manner of the shoemaker, and he seated on a sort of low work-stool, with last and shoe on knee, so was he inducted into all the rights and "mysteries" of the fraternity. This was the last of the brighter reminiscences of the company; for never since that proud day has either Duke, or Lord, or Knight of Shire, sought and confessed a similar honour; the prospect of an election-dinner—near or more distant, as the state of the political horizon may seem to prefigure—being all which the members have now to felicitate themselves upon. Even this, however, is something—something well-worthy of the earnest concern of the so-generally necessitated tradesmen of our own day,—something to look forward to—to a table well-covered, with salmon, roast and boiled beef and mutton, pie, pudding, the best ales and cider, the hot and sparkling glass of brandy and water; and all at free cost; the Member of Parliament of present times, in place of charging his two shillings a-day as Hoskyns charged, doing all his labour for nothing, and bestowing *gratis* dinners upon the various knots of his constituency, into the bargain!

# TRADE HISTORIES:

## THE WORK, AND THE WORKER.

BY JAMES DACRES DEVLIN,

AUTHOR OF "THE SHOEMAKER," IN KNIGHT'S SERIES OF  
TRADE GUIDES.

"All true Work is sacred; in all true work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness. Labour, wide as the earth, has its summit in Heaven."—*Thomas Carlyle*.

### I.

#### THE TRADES OF DRESS.

- 1.—The TAILOR, HOSIER, AND STAYMAKER: including the Ancient Frippery Dealer, and the equally pains-taking Modern followers of the same Occupation.
- 2.—The NEEDLE IN FAIR HAND: or The Female Makers of Female Apparel; with Auxilliary Notices of such other  
"needleworkes  
That women exercise."  
*Ancient Epitaph in one of the London Churches.*
- 3.—The HATTER, CAPPER, BONNETER, GLOVER, AND STOCKINGER: with an additional Chapter, as illustrative of the History of Head Ornaments, on BEARDS and BARBERS.
- 4.—SHOES, SHOEMAKERS, and SHOEMAKER STORIES: or, The History, Biography, and Romance of the Trade.
- 5.—PICTORIAL ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE TRADES OF DRESS.

With the view of rendering one of the prominent features of the Volumes here mentioned, more satisfactory, and of much more utility, to both the particular and general purchaser, a numerous class of wood-engravings—to be selected from the best authorities, and executed in the best manner—is proposed as a necessary accompaniment to the HISTORY OF COSTUME, as will be fully given in these several works; and in which Engravings, either whole-length figures, or, as the circumstances require it, special articles will be introduced; making use, at the same time, of a concise running record, in the shape of foot-notes, of the dates and peculiarities to be noticed, with a reference, in all cases, to the fuller account, as given in the text. By this scheme, not only greater economy, but first-rate excellence, in the getting up of these illustrations, will be secured; and to the better gratification also, in another way, of the eye, and entertainment of the mind—a hat, bonnet, robe, gown, shoe, glove, or any single piece of dress, never looking so well by itself, as when in connection with their proper companion-pieces. Particular representations, however, must still occasionally have their use, and as such, will be duly given.

## II.

In part connected with the above Series, and also as a subject, which, in itself, must always be of the greatest national importance, a Volume will be on

**THE TANNER, CURRIER, AND LEATHER MANUFACTURE IN GENERAL.**

## III.

The last of the Works of this now proposed undertaking—though not the last in the order in which they are intended to be printed—will be

**A GENERAL VIEW OF THE RISE, PROGRESS, USAGES, AND DECLINE OF OUR EARLY INCORPORATED TRADE COMPANIES OR GUILDS.**

**PASSAGES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES IN RECOMMENDATION OF SOME SUCH AN UNDERTAKING.**

“The Annalist who wishes to inform, must often quit the splendid scene of national glory, and condescend to particularise the humble occupations of mankind.”—*Sir F. Morton Eden*, 1780.

“It is related of Heraclitus, that when his scholars found him in a tradesman’s shop, whither they were ashamed to enter, he told them that the Gods were as conversant in such places as in others; intimating that a Divine power and wisdom might be discerned, even in those common arts which are most despised.”—*Bishop Wilkins*, 1648.

“How much doubt and debate among philosophers could be settled by the most ignorant peasant or the most humble artizan, if the dead of a thousand years were summoned back to life.”—*Hon. Holt Mackenzie*, 1842.

“I have often wished [that writers] would take the pains to inquire into the mysteries of trades, and give us an account, some of one trade and some of another, though the more are handled by the same person the better.”—*Hon. Robert Boyle*, 1665.

“I would suggest whether a course of lectures, intended to illustrate the history of the more important trades, and of the great blessings they have conferred on society, and of the eminent individuals who have practised them, might not do much to instruct and elevate.”—*Dr. Channing*, 1838.

“We recommend, therefore, the compiling of a work wherein all the practised ways of getting a subsistence, and whereby men raise their fortunes, may at length be declared. And among these, we wish that a History of Arts or Manufactures might first be undertaken, as the most pleasant and profitable of all the rest.”—*Advice to Mr. Samuel Hartlip, for the Advancement of some particular Parts of Learning*, 1648.

## ADDRESS.

As the Series of Works whose titles are here given, are, as the heading of this Prospectus states, a "novelty" in literary endeavour, it will be requisite, as with novelties generally, to explain one's self still further than it is possible to do through the means of title-page making, however happily such titles be chosen. These works, then, although so diverse in their subjects, will bear, in the main, a common relation to each other, and have, in reality, but one common purpose and end—that of creating a taste for, and proving the importance of, INDUSTRIAL HISTORY, as a very extensive and pregnant element of social knowledge—an element which has hitherto been at best but merely glanced at, and this, too, but rarely. They are intended, in fact, besides their connection with the present condition of society, as being part of the parentage from whence has sprung those stupendous results which the industrial position of Great Britain now exhibits, to trace and make known something of the *real business life* of man in the Past; and thus, by example, to show, through the particular instances so adduced, how much remains to be done in this way towards acquiring a full and true perception of this PAST, and of those lingering influences, which, we scarcely know how, are evermore holding by our affections, keeping, as it were, the heart still leal to its ancient love, though unknowing why we should be so trammelled, as regards the great question of whether "for better or worse." It is time therefore, that this subject should be fairly and distinctly investigated; that if anything of the neglected or vanished is good, that this good should be sedulously sought for and boldly brought forth; that the bad, if still clinging to and hampering our endeavours, should be carefully tested, and at once wholly dismissed; while, as to the strange and the grotesque, surely if these can neither advantage nor harm, it is scarcely wise to be so stiff in our wisdom, as to consign such mere innoxious curiosities to an unredeemable oblivion, for while the tumbler and the conjuror can still delight so many in our streets and exhibition-places, why should the flesh-framed, and passion-impulsive reader in his closet, be denied to have *his* laugh and *his*

smile, in his own way, and to his better information of what poor human nature has always been? This would be no philosophy, but a real stupid ignorance; for as this earth has its crooked places as well as its smoothnesses, so Knowledge has its occasional abandonments, as well as its loftiest soarings.

Something more is necessary to be said, and especially in reference to the first-mentioned work of the series whose titles have been given,—necessary for a particular reason,—and will, no doubt, be looked for by many of that class to whom, it is to be hoped, the production in question will prove both an instructive and entertaining companion.

At the commencement of "*Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper*," the writer engaged to produce under the head of "THE INDUSTRIAL INTERESTS," a series of short articles on the Trades generally; and wrote a few of those concerning the Tailor, but his materials—during the few months' eager and attentive research which he so employed himself—having accumulated much more abundantly than he at first anticipated, the design had to be given up of continuing such a mode of publication; and now he has resolved to throw the whole of what he had so collected, with other subsequently gathered matter, into the form of a distinct work, adding the Hosier and Stay-making Trades, and the making of Women's Apparel generally, as it will be shown that originally, as also up to a comparatively recent period, these were but branches of the one common profession.

These volumes (for there will be two of them), beside treating of the Artistic and Social Progress of the conjoined interests concerned, or rather of the One Trade in its different departments, will necessarily contain a great variety of particulars about Dress, male and female, such as in these countries have been fashionable from time to time; while, as more immediately illustrative of the peculiar history of the Tailor, in the every-day endeavours of life, it will also comprise, what is in no other book of this or any trade or kind, a carefully selected record of the business proceedings, for many centuries, of one of the oldest Guild establishments in the Empire—namely, that of the Tailor's Company of Exeter, which received its charter in the early part of the reign of Edward the First; as, also, many particulars of the companies of the same trade in London and different of our old cities.

The work will also contain a number of Biographical Notices of Eminent Tailors, as a portion of the many ex-

amples, which almost the history of every trade can adduce, of Mind forcing for itself a way outward from its own early darkness, and illumining those bone-ingirded temples which mark the frontal seats of this *mind*, in that heaven-light of knowledge accessible to all. The bright and wide-covered sky has no privileged adorants; the poorest and the proudest have their heads lifted in the same direction; and never yet has that human being existed, who, at every time, and under all circumstances, was "all earthly." The great Creator has ever been too good and too generous for this; and bad men only, in their worst moments, have assumed that there has been such an ordination! But, yet, they only *assumed* it; for even still they knew in their hearts that this their teaching was false.

But to revert again to the History of the TAILOR, as the subject which has more immediately given rise to these explanatory remarks. The writer deems it necessary further to state, that his main object in both this and the other proposed works, is to continue what he at first intended on the coming out of the fore-mentioned newspaper—though with better effect, because in a more leisurely and less circumscribed manner—a Series of Trade Histories, of which there is nothing of the kind in the language, beginning with the more prominent; and, should the endeavour prove in any degree successful, to follow them up with shorter accounts of the rest of the Industrial Interests.

And now as to the way in which this is to be effected. The writer, it must be borne in mind, is no more, in regard to his wordly position, than a mere working man himself; though one, as he has the satisfaction to say, who has no dislike to either the name or the fair share of responsibility such a position may entail; and yet in undertaking what he now undertakes and in accomplishing so much as he already has accomplished—without help-seeking, favour-seeking or pecuniary assistance from any one; but, really, in many cases, under the severest trials, it is not to be expected, that, in addition to all this, he can now achieve the still harder task of coining the waste bits of leather of his work-shop into so many mint-stamped pieces of legitimate currency, with which he can satisfy the printer for the heavy charge of giving his manuscripts the shape of type-impressed leaves, and the book-binder, for the secondary demand of putting these leaves in covers. This difficulty is entirely beyond his own power to meet; and hence, he has no other chance of ever actually producing the now proposed volumes, except through the means

of securing *Subscribers*,—the last, and the sternest difficulty of the poor and unknown author. He begs, therefore, that the mode of proceeding adopted, will be considered as the only one which is open to him. He must either be supported in this way, or be compelled to wholly give up the idea of ever carrying out his intentions, of adding—as he fain would hope—a few Useful Novelties to the many other attractions of the book-shelf—be this shelf of mahogany, or any other valuable wood, or the meanest make-shift for the library of the humblest artizan.

As such, then, is the plain state of this really forbidden monetary view of the affair; yet anxious, if it be possible to get over the difficulty, he would fain catch at another means of help towards the safe success of his more important ambitioning—in these his books on Trade History—by appearing, also, as a verse writer, in the production of a volume to be called

### THE SOLACE OF SOLITUDE.

The poem which is to make the principal feature in this collection, has now been in manuscript for about twenty years, being twice the period which has been advised in the cautious wisdom of Pope, for the keeping of such things. During its composition, it was found to be not only a useful, but a thoroughly absorbing exercise for the mind; and the poor, or even rich, man, who, in the present generation, is not content with this return for his labour in such a self-enjoying pursuit has, as may be inferred, more verse-vanity in his brain, than what is named common sense. The present is, in great part, a hard-pushing, shoulder-aside age; and is not to be won off the metal track of its railway pursuits, for the glorifying of any lonely Rhymster whatever. The Eremites of the Muses have no longer their temples of worship, and crowds of worshippers; as it has been with the Monk and his oratories, so these, too, have all departed! And if a few among the active crowd ever bestow a thought upon any such subjects now, it is generally accompanied with the consciousness that there is some imminent peril in so doing. It is not, therefore, to be looked upon as a Poet, in the proper, and ancient venerated sense of the term, that this volume—to make use of a very homely phrase—has been *lugged* in along with the others, but, as before stated, to make it, if possible, assist in some slight degree, to the quicker production of these others. An efficient imme-

diate subscription would do this. But how this is to be, or indeed, how these proposals altogether will be received, must remain to the option of others. If supported, the volumes will appear ; if not, they cannot ; and the labour be lost, and the hope lost ; though yet there will still remain the consoling reflection, that the resolutely economised leisure of so many days, weeks, months, and years, which it has taken to gather the materials and otherwise conduct the attempt so far, will not go unrewarded even then, as during these endeavours there has uniformly been experienced a deep satisfaction in acquiring an always enlarging acquaintance with the past generations of men, once like oneself—the same hearts of flesh—the same inherent qualities of mind—but differently acted upon, and striving for similar advantages, though not in the same way, nor not to be used in the same.

This, in itself, is no ignoble study ; it is in reality the only way of making History useful,—and some day—soon or long-coming—the tide of Human Thought and Human Affection will earnestly set in in this direction, and thenceforth find its constant fruitage in the purer and fuller kind of good which will now be borne about the world—from region to region—from nook to nook, wherever Man has placed himself—a link of the great universal man. How much, too, may be predicted of a series of Industrial Histories like these, in another way ? How much may not be gained, as a means of enlivening the dull routine of the Counting-house, and the general sameness of the Workshop ? How much matter for the most interesting gossip, in the casual intercourse of all concerned ? How much which even the consumer or *customer* may feel an interest in knowing ; and how much to cheer and encourage the young beginner, and likewise to charm the very oldest veterans,—those who in themselves can recall so many changes, socially and artistically, in their own employments, but who, through information brought from still earlier times, must, consequently, enjoy a still larger circle of pleasant retrospection. Business, in all its gradations, as it encircles and cleaves to the real soul-immersed *business-man* of the present, in affording none of those glimpses of its earlier aspects and changes, haunts him, as it were, in the shape of some huge Ogre, which had never either birth, youth, or growth itself, but had always been, and still will be, the same—a very Monster of Monotony ! How much then, is needed to alter all this, and how necessary the endeavour !



One other word. Feeling it may be asked, what sufficient pretensions the author can show to write these books—and a very proper inquiry too, it is—the only honest answer to be given is, That he *believes* he can fittingly accomplish that which is he so desirous of undertaking; nor has this opinion come upon him with any such extreme haste, as to make its healthiness fairly doubtful. He has bestowed upon the attempt much serious thought, and thus such belief—be it in its main what it may be—is not *all* inspiration. And, besides, as he has not only obtained the approval of several distinguished individuals, of high station and literary attainments, as far as they could conceive of the merits of such a project, but also has already been a sort of book-maker, in the small volume of his writing published by Mr. Knight, and in a few other such humble instances; so he is still more desirous of proving himself worthy of such favourable opinion, by the effective execution of the present much more extensive and difficult undertaking. He may say, also, in regard to the little he has effected, that he has been much more fortunate in the share of commendation he has received than originally could be anticipated from the nature of these productions; and this has still more helped his confidence in himself; while now, in conclusion, he hopes he will have the best consideration of the reader for appending to this long Prospectus,—long, because of the peculiar character of these proposals, and the very great importance of them to himself,—two or three extracts from the journals whose names are attached, towards not only showing some proof of what is here stated, but also for the better satisfaction of whoever may take an interest in the success of the undertaking, by supporting either in the whole, or separately, any of the proposed productions. Either way is open to the Subscriber, as each work will be quite independent in itself, having its own distinct title; though, for the sake of completeness, in the series embracing the **TRADES OF DRESS**, both general and special titles will be given, so that whoever may wish to take all, can have them as a *series*; while, at the same time, either the Tailor, Shoemaker, Hatter, Dressmaker, &c., who may only care about the book that concerns themselves, or such as any other individual would prefer, will alike be suited.

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\* \* As the volume of Poems is to be the first got out; so a Reprint, with Notes and suitable Introductions—making full half the book—of an extremely rare and

curious work, called "*The History of the Gentle Craft*," by Thomas Deloney, a writer of the time of Elizabeth, will be the second; or, if possible, both will be brought out together. This author, Deloney, is well known to those conversant with our old literature, for being one of the earliest writers of the historical novel, or romance; for, beside the present-named production, he also wrote the once very popular histories (as such books were then called) of *John of Winchcombe*, and *Jack of Reading*; while, as a balladist, he is even still more famous, by those first-rate pieces of this class—*Fair Rosamond*, *The Spanish Ladye*, *The King of France's Daughter*, and others. The members of the Percy Society have already honoured his memory by reprinting one of his small poetical volumes; while his *Jack of Reading* has been done the same by in Mr. Thoms' collection of *Early English Prose Romances*, as published about twenty years ago, by Pickering. *The Gentle Craft*, as yet, has been less fortunate, for although, during the two centuries and a half of its existence, it has been put through numerous editions, still, all of these, less or more, have been sadly curtailed and otherwise injuriously altered, as has been the fate of most of those once extensively-purchased productions, known by the name of *chap-books*; the speculators in such publications aiming solely to meet the scanty means of the purchaser, without the least concern about the integrity of the copy. The present reprint, however, will be pure and perfect in this particular; for, through the kindness of J. Payne Collier, Esq.—a gentleman so well known for his knowledge of the Literature of the Drama, for his edition of Shakspeare, and his other editorial labours—the first edition of *The Gentle Craft* (the only perfect copy I have been ever able to trace) will be the one used; while, if an earnest care, and fellow-love of the subject, may give promise of any merit in the Notes, &c., with which this Reprint will be accompanied, so, it is hoped, the volume on its appearance will not disappoint such promise.

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#### NOTICES OF "THE SHOEMAKER."

"This is a useful work, valuable as a guide to a widely spread trade, with numerous followers, and not without interest for the public. \* \* \* The hints for intellectual improvement, which Mr. DEVLIN gives his brethren of the

trade, are valuable, and they have the great merit of being directed to the special circumstances of their employment and condition.—*Athenæum*, June 1, 1839.

"It is remarkably clever and intelligent, and so full of pleasant information of a general kind, besides its abundant instruction for the trade itself, that we can confidently recommend it to everybody's reading. \* \* It is a *Guide to the Trade* in the best sense of the word. It is written with great simplicity, great earnestness, and a thorough knowledge of the subject in all respects. The first part is addressed to the *journeyman*, and the second to the *master*, and both are full of instruction of the best kind, with the accompaniment of lively gossip and agreeable historical notices."—*Examiner*, Jan. 10, 1841.

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The following are selected from some of the Reviews of a Pamphlet, printed in the winter of 1838, entitled "*The Boot and Shoe Trade of France, as it affects the Interest of the British Manufacturer in the same Business.*"

"With the discussion as to the relative merits of the French and English manufacture, we shall not concern ourselves; but the work is remarkable, coming from an operative or interested tradesman, for the large views taken as to the remedial measures which ought to be adopted, and for the honesty with which the writer directs the attention of his fellow-sufferers to the only legitimate resources open to them."—*Athenæum*.

"His information is not only interesting to the producer, but to the consumer."—*Spectator*.

"We have seldom read a work of sounder principles, more sensibly applied."—*Weekly Dispatch*.


"In quoting so largely from Mr. DEVLIN's Pamphlet, we think we shall be excused by him, the more so as he declares in his preface that it is written with a thorough conviction of its utility, and with the desire and aim to assist the well-being of *his trade*."—*Mechanics' Magazine*.

From *Leigh Hunt's London Journal* (No. 86), in reference to some pieces, in verse and prose, inserted in a provincial newspaper, and afterwards collected into a small volume.

"Under this modest title [*The Trialist*] the reader will be pleased to see an extract so fitting for the *LONDON JOURNAL*, so very creditable to the abilities of the writer,

and so pleasantly significant of the times. We regret we cannot give the whole of the article. It is written throughout in the spirit of manly good-nature, which feels for all, while it makes its own way.—In the same number of the *Dover Chronicle* are some verses by the same writer on a beautiful passage in a letter of Southey's to Sir Egerton Bridges, and worthy of it. We shall extract them in a week or two."

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 The price of each volume to Subscribers will be FIVE SHILLINGS; and the size uniform with the well-known series of *Lardner's Cyclopædia*, but containing, in general, more pages. Subscribers' Names received by the Author, and the Publisher of the present volume; as, also, by such other friends to the general undertaking as may so far interest themselves in its behalf.



Legends - Brit.  
& Mordiford Dragon.

THE

# MORDIFORD DRAGON ;

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE PRIEST, LADY, AND BAILIFF ;

A TALE OF HEREFORD OF THE TIME OF THE CONQUEST :

AS ALSO,

THE VERSES ON THE AGED "AUNT BESS."

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BY J. DACRES DEVLIN.

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HEREFORD:

PRINTED BY C. ANTHONY, WIDEMARSH-STREET.

1848.

THE matter concerning the MORDIFORD DRAGON, contained in the following pages, appeared in seven successive portions of the *Hereford Times*, the Poetry being given before the Prose ; but which order is now reversed, on their reproduction in their present form. The Notice which accompanied the first of these portions, when printed, it may be necessary here to repeat. This is it :—

“ The Readers of the *Hereford Times* will, it is to be hoped, excuse the appearance of this Tale, in the present instance, in place of a continuation of the Cordwainer articles, and the Verse-glances at Hereford Scenery, &c., already begun in this paper. The writer has been for some six or seven weeks absent from Hereford, during which time he has seen a good deal of a particular portion of this county, and of the rich and beautiful scenery of Monmouthshire ; as also of the mountains, Tin and Iron Works, in South Wales ; and of which *scetings*, and his observations thereon, he proposes to make some record as soon as he can clear off his already promised arrears in respect to both the subjects above mentioned. As we are now, however, fast getting into the long winter nights—the nights for story-telling—he is in haste to do something as his own share of amusement in this way ; and hence, as his first contribution, on his return, he sends the Mordiford Dragon ; two other versions of which, beside the one now before the reader, he intends also to give ; and, after, some prose remarks, in illustration of these different versions.”

Cathedral Close, Nov. 8th, 1847.

At the end of the verses on the *Mordiford Dragon*, the intelligent reader, will, no doubt, be much gratified to find himself put in possession of the communication, there given, from Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, on the origin of this and similar stories of the ancient lindenworm, dragon, or serpent.

The few other pieces which follow, appeared, likewise, in the *Hereford Times*, on the weeks in which they are severally dated.

This statement will, perhaps, excuse in some degree such typographical and other errors as this hurried mode of going through the Press, and piece-meal writing, is so liable to occasion. There is none can walk over a rutted road as securely as over a smooth one ; and especially if driven.

# THE DRAGON OF MORDIFORD;

BEING THE WHOLE HISTORY OF HOW IT WAS FIRST FOUND AND  
FED, BY AN INNOCENT AND AFFECTIONATE YOUNG GIRL—  
OF ITS BAD AFTER-DOINGS—AND ITS DEATH ; INCLUDING  
THE FULL PARTICULARS OF THE ANCIENT PAINTING OF THE  
TERRIBLE MONSTER ON THE CHURCH. ALSO, THE THREE  
CHIEF VERSIONS OF THE STORY, NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME  
TRICKED OUT IN RHYME.

The reputed existence and desperate criminalities of the Mordiford Dragon, or, as it is also frequently called, the Mordiford Serpent, is the subject of a very ancient tradition in that neighbourhood, and is, likewise, often heard of throughout the county generally. It is in its main features a strange tale—much too strange to have been easily forgotten in local estimation, though it is somewhat remarkable, that not one of the poets of this old beautiful border region of England and Wales, has, as yet, attempted to marry the tradition to their verse, and thus to give it some chance of rescue from that total oblivion with which it has so long been threatened. And what the Poet has thus despised, so, as it may be supposed, has likewise the Historian.

Yes, Mordiford ! all have hitherto neglected your great wonder—neglected it, even as the loveliness of your site



has in like manner been neglected, so snugly and so charmingly placed as your old church and modest houses are, with some of the finest hill scenery propping up their aged backs, and your feet still undergoing the operation of the most charitable, christian-like, washing, in the confluent waters of the Lug and the Wye ! Had it been your good fate to have had a Homer born to you, like him of immortal Greece, certainly it had not been thus ; for, then, the Conquest of the Dragon, had surely offered as good a subject for an epic—aye, an epic ! as the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, or even of an Achilles and a Hector ! Mordiford, however, has as yet produced no Homer ; and hence, although our English literature can boast of its stories of George and the Dragon—the Dragon of Wantley—and the Fiery Serpent or Dragon of Folkstone, with a few others of similar character, the Serpent or Dragon of Eastwood has been lamentably neglected. Before, however, I come to adduce the particulars of such neglect, it will be requisite that, in the infancy of these pages, the infancy also of that which is their subject should be glanced at, and thus to lead on the reader, in true biographical routine, from “beginning to end.” The following, then, is such account ; my informant in this case (for in matters of importance like the present, the writer should be always particular in stating his authority), being a person having the greatest faith in all he says in regard to this matter. He tells me that while living at Bishop Hampton, the adjoining village, on the Hereford side, to Mordiford, he often heard an old man of the name of Wigley,\* then nearly a centenarian in

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\* This venerable Mr. Wigley (how old-fashioned is the very name ?—and wisdom-full, too,—being of the family of the Wigs !)

“The great historian of the mighty dead,”

is the identical person, who in the more active periods of his life, was the poet, basket-maker, and boatman of the following

years, discourse of the far-famed Dragon of the *locale* of his birth ; and this, in its early part, was the relation he gave, though perhaps not altogether couched in his own language.

very business-like verses. Mr. Davies, in whose collection I find them, thinks from their typographical character (for they had the honour to be "put in print,") that their production may be set down to the year 1796, or thereabouts. It will be observed that in one of the notes, the Wigleys of the Wye are said to have spread themselves as far along the banks of this river, as from Fownhope to Moccas,—the extraordinary distance of about twenty miles,—and all, too, being basket makers, "from father to son!" From this statement, then, we gather, the fact that Mordiford must have been one of the places where the Wigleys their "trade carried on." But now let the verses, with their accompanying explanations, speak for themselves :—

"THE PETITION OF JOHN WIGLEY, BASKET-MAKER, WHO SUFFERED BY THE FIRE, TO F. WOODHOUSE, ESQ., STEWARD.

"This dire event,  
To Hampton sent,  
Has stopt, I swear by the Pope,  
The trade carried on,\*  
From father to son,  
From Moccas to Fownhope.†  
My stones‡ being flaw'd,  
I'm clapper-claw'd,§  
My heart is set to aching ;  
My vessels all dry,||  
Of twigs no supply,  
There's an end to basket-making !  
Pray stand my friend,  
Assistance lend,  
Once more set me afloat,  
And grateful mind  
You'll ever find  
In John at Hampton's boat." ¶

From this specimen it will be learned that the present Thomas Miller is not, in order of time at least, the *first* of our poetical basket-makers, whatever he may be in merit. Nothing, however, that Miller has done in prose, is better than some of Wigley's Notes, as where he speaks of the "old trade of basket-making,"—the supposed "clapper-clawing" of his wife, put so cunningly into the mouth of another ; and, then, to crown all, how very much, indeed, is in the emphatic affirmative—that he, John Wigley, is the Ferryman "at Hampton's boat!"

\* The old trade of basket-making.

† The family of the Wigleys reach so far on the banks of the Wye.

‡ The stones of the cider-mill, which were cracked by the heat.

§ By his wife, 'tis supposed.

|| His cider hogsheds and twigs were destroyed.

¶ He keeps the boat.

Long, long ago, soon after Mordiford had been blessed with the building of a church of its own, and people began from time to time to plant their habitations as near as possible to that church, a little artless girl, the daughter of a small proprietor of the place, wandering about the verge of the adjacent hills one day, just as the blackberries had commenced to ripen, observed, as she bent down to pluck a delicious branch of this fine rich fruit of nature's most generous bestowing, as it fell gracefully and enticingly over a gentle slope, something stirring in the long grass below. At first she was slightly struck with fear; and seemed inclined to hurry from the place, her parents having often cautioned her of the wild things of the woods. The native curiosity, however, of her sex—young as she was—displacing as instantly this sudden feeling of danger, she only withdrew a few steps backward, and there stood waiting to see what might next happen. Nor had she to wait long; for now more fully appeared one of the most beautiful little creatures imaginable, being scarcely the size of a cucumber, and in the form of its body very much like this oblong growing root. It sprung forth before her with a sort of flying hop, and then settled itself steadily on the sun-embrowned level sward. Its whole frame was the colour of the greenest grass; it had a slender pointed tail, which at one moment would be stretched out level with the ground, and the next twisted, as it were, gladsomely, over the back. Wings, too, it had, even as a pretty bird; and legs, also, like a bird, or like herself, though these legs were very short. But the greater fascination was about its head, it was so exquisitely sloping from the skull down to the extreme of its mouth. And the eyes!—the eyes appeared as brilliant as the very stars themselves, and always in dazzling movement.

Such was this charming creature ; and now softly laying herself along the ground, and looking at it kindly and steadily, she began to call it many endearing names—as pet, darling, &c., motioning with her hand the while, as it were to one of her playmates, for it to come to her. And it did come—though slowly, inch by inch—now suddenly stopping, and now moving as suddenly a little more forward, though never once taking its eyes off her eyes, as if it had agreeably found in those girl-glistening orbs a looking-glass to reflect its own surpassing beauty !

“Pet ! Darling !” she again repeated, as the lovely little stranger now allowed itself to be touched by the gentle fingers of the enraptured girl—“darling ! and you will come to me, will you ?” and then she bent over her lips and actually kissed the pretty wonder—kissed it on the head, and fancied, perhaps, that this token of endearment was returned, as it turned up, in a slight degree, its own small peaky mouth at the moment.

From this time the two were friends. She now spread out her hand, with the back of it laid against the ground, and thereon, quite confidently, the young Dragon at once sprang. “You will come home with me, then ?” she asked in the softest and most affectionate tone of voice ; and as it said nothing, she took for granted that it would ; so putting it tenderly within that part of her apparel which covered her now rapidly beating breast, she hurried to her parents as fast as possible.

“O mother ! O father ! brother ! baby !—all !” were her first eager words on returning home. “O what I have found !” and the mother asked what she meant, the father the while wondering much at the reason for such joyous excitement. After these strange exclamations, she motionless stood before the eyes of the whole family ; when now

her little brother, being apparently as much excited as herself, merely, as it seemed, because he did not know why, ran forward and asked her eagerly where and what it was, and to show it him, taking hold of her at the same time hastily by the hand, and forcing open the fingers to see what therein was to be discovered. "No ; not there ! not there !" she said ; and then when he had loosened his hold, she went forward to where her mother was seated at the further end of the apartment, and stooping her bosom over that so loved mother-lap, there and then outsprung the bosom-held captive ! The mother, seeing what she saw, rose hastily up in a state bordering upon deep fright, and down fell, or rather flew, the new-comer on the floor ; while the father laughed, but whether from the oddity of having been brought such an unusual addition to his family, or at the sudden terror of his wife, is matter of doubt. "Maud," he then said, for that was the name of his eldest and favourite child, "that is a wicked thing you have brought home with you ; I wonder it has not killed you before now, either with its sting or with its breath."

"Merciful God !" rejoined the wife, recovering herself now a little, "and the girl has brought home a young Dragon !" "A Dragon, mother ! what is a Dragon ?" cried out Maud. "I am sure it loves me, and I love it. It kissed me, too ! it did, mother ! and crept into my bosom, and kept so quiet there ! Oh, mother ! it is not as father says, a wicked thing." "It must be killed !" replied the father ; and he stepped quickly across the floor in the direction of the little unfearing stranger, and lifted up one of his feet as if with the determination of crushing it to instant death.

Maud at this moment took hold of her father by the knee, and with tears in her eyes begged of him that he

would not kill it. This appeal was irresistible. He put down his foot again, and now appeared, even like Maud herself, to take a liking to the little sportive creature, for by this time it had got near the kindly blaze of the wood fire, and there turned and twisted itself about in the most interesting evolutions. It now, indeed, seemed quite at home; and Maud to make it so—taking advantage of her father's generous desistance, and her mother's not yet wholl overcome trepidation—ran across to the kitchen dresser, and snatching down a small wooden bowl of milk, which she had discovered, she placed it at once before the little hearth-gamboller; and when, as if to acknowledge this additional trait of kindness in its new acquaintance, it ran sportively round and round the bowl for several seconds, and then, reaching over the edge with its thin out-stretched neck, it actually touched the white fluid with its fine, tweezer-like lips, and began to drink of the same.

"It knows what it is, mother," said Maud. "See! see! it drinks! Oh, mother! father! will you not let me keep it now? It will be such a pretty plaything, too, for baby!" In this way Maud went on for some time longer, though still neither her father nor mother made any answer; when now Maud's urchin brother joined in the same request, and added, "aye, Maud, and for me too!"

What was now to be done? The father and mother went towards the door, and said a few words to each other, when turning to the eagerly watchful girl, they both told her it must be killed—it was so dangerous. She now became almost frantic, bursting at once into tears, and exhibiting, while she thus cried so bitterly, the heaviest heart-throbbings. On seeing this the father spoke again.

"Well, Maud, we will not now do as we said, but only put it by for you for a time in some place of safety, and

after we have proved that it will do no harm, perhaps you may then give it some milk as before.

This pleased Maud. She soon dried up her tears ; and the father, acting in seeming accordance with his words, now contrived to entrap the youngling dragon into a small box, by lifting up the milk bowl and spilling some of its contents therein, which spillings it as instantly followed with its peculiar half-flying and half-leaping motion. It was thus no sooner in the box than the lid was clapped down ; and then the father took up the box and carried it into an outhouse, with orders that no one should touch it again for that evening—as no doubt, as he now expressed himself,—it would want to take a good sleep.

So far, then, all seemed right to Maud ; and she began now to play about the house as usual, though with a more than common flow of spirits. At night, however, when in bed, and she being, as her parents thought, fast asleep—though she could not yet sleep for thinking on that day's good luck—she overheard her father and mother speak about the box and its new tenant.

"In the morning," said the father, "if it is not already dead by then, from want of air and more food, we must make away with it before Maud is dressed and about ; and we may tell her it got loose, or has died—anything to pacify her under the disappointment."

Maud heard all this, and took it to heart most sorrowfully ; but being of a surprising energy of character in one so young, she waited her opportunity, and creeping from her bed, unclothed as she was, silently unlatched the door, and made her way directly to the outhouse. Being there, she soon found out that which was the object of her search, when opening the iron hasp which held down its lid, she turned over the box on its face upon a piece of old

handkerchief-stuff which she had brought with her, and then gathering up the ends, while she pushed away the box with one of her feet, she thus secured the silent inmate.

But what must she next do ? Why, hide her prize in some way or other until to-morrow, and this she effectually did in the corner of the same outhouse, among some hay.

That morrow soon came ; for notwithstanding the probable safety of her new *protegé*, she was out of her bed long before her parents, in her resolution of doing something still further in the matter so close at her heart. She now, on opening up the warm hiding hay, found all as she hoped, for on lifting out the handkerchief there was still evidently life in it, from the movements there exhibited.

“No, no, they shall not kill you,” she said to herself ; and then she carefully deposited her precious charge in the same place again ; after which she ran into the house, but soon returned, bringing with her a little milk to feed, as she feared, the hungry.

Having now obtained something for her pet to partake of, she unloosed at once the folds of the material in which it was enveloped, and, lo ! there it was as handsome and trustful as ever, but much more hungry ; for on seeing the milk it instantly ran to it, and made a most plentiful feast—so plentiful that it did not seem to care about moving at all, and only went as far as the pile of loose hay close by, into which it wound itself, with a curious dexterity, head and tail curled up together, and saying to Maud, as plainly as such action could say to her, “Now, Maud, go in-doors like a good girl ; I am here very comfortable, and would wish to sleep, having but little rest all the night, as I feared some ill was to be done me.”

Something like this the young Dragon might have said,



or Maud might have fancied that she heard it say, and, therefore, in pleased obedience she went her way. But now both father and mother were also got up, and asking where she had been so early (for no doubt they guessed), she boldly told them, to let out the captive that it might not be starved ! “ And you have done so ? ” they eagerly rejoined. “ Yes,” she answered ; “ and now it hath stolen away in some place or other where nobody can find it ; or perhaps, the dog has caught it, and worried it up.”

Here she spoke that which she knew was not right ; but as she feared, after what she had heard of her parents’ intention, to make known the truth, so she said anything in the hurry of her terrors that might be the means of averting suspicion of that which she had actually been doing in behalf of the young Dragon.

Such, as the tale goes, is the account given of the first appearance of the Dragon of Mordiford ; and then we are further told, that the girl and the Dragon continuing their friendly connection, it grew up as she grew up, bigger and bigger, [still lodging itself as near as possible to the place where she lived ; and she on all occasions feeding it—unknown to all, as she could—with its accustomed milky beverage ; for afterwards, when, in due time, she was able herself to tend on the cows, she had much better opportunities to help it in this way.

At length, however, its naturally vicious propensities became so strongly and unremittingly to manifest themselves, that it was now no longer to be satisfied with mere milk : it had tasted, and began to seek still for—blood ! to kill such hens, ducks, geese, &c., as it might happen to find straying within the range of its hiding haunts ; and from this, at last, to lay in wait for, and destroy, the sheep, the kine ; and next, even to attack man himself.

But Maud it never hurt ; and Maud, too, always continued to love it as at first ; making, as she did, for its manifold guilty doings, all such tender excuses as her own sweet nature could offer, and these were ever abundant.

The Dragon she would say (such was the extent of her forgiving kindness), was solely made bad by the bad treatment it had received. If others had been good to it, it would have been the same to them. So she reasoned, and so she believed ; nor was she without some excusable justification in making known these her sentiments, whenever she reflected that she had never yet observed in the conduct of that Dragon to her the slightest cause of distrust or danger. It would still, as a loving dog, fawn upon her, and kiss her hand ; would still shew the most lively signs of gladness to meet her, and regretful concern when about to depart.

All this, then, was very wonderful ; and more particularly so when such affectionate conduct was contrasted with those ever-recurring instances of its depredations which had now become the theme of everybody's talk, and the cause of their terror. Of Maud it was still the friend ; of all else the foe. Thus it lived, the dread and hate of all ! and still,—and ever since, its very memory has been treated so foe-like, that the kindlier part of the relation which has just been given, is now for the first time put upon paper. No one before has had the hardihood to say the least thing that might be construed to its favour, though surely, as the old adage goes, the devil should still have his due.

There would seem, indeed, to be a very unusual conspiracy, among authors in general, in not only this, but in every other particular, favourable or not, respecting the Mordiford Dragon ; for as no one, as yet, has stated

the whole of the story, so the few (and these are truly but a *few*) who have attempted it in part, might just as well have said nothing ; their want of industry, earnestness, and faith, being alike perceptible. The assertion, however, thus made, is, withal, somewhat difficult of proof—difficult, because of this very paucity. If we look in the two thick volumes of the chief historian of the county—turn them over as we will, leaf by leaf—such inquisition will be almost a “labour lost ;” and the same in every other likely direction, the expectation and the research are so constantly disappointed. Where we expect most, we find least.

The earliest written notice, therefore, as far as I have been able to discover, of the subject under consideration, has been kindly communicated to me by the Rev. Charles J. Bird, the venerable and intelligent Rector of Mordiford, in the following extract from the second volume of a local collection known by the name of the Blount Manuscripts. It is no more than a couple of couplets, the first of which (as it would seem from the style of wording employed,) was probably painted over the figure of the Dragon on the end of the Church, and the second, beneath it :—

“This is the true Effigy of that strange  
Prodigious monster which our woods range.”

“In Eastwood it by Garstone’s hand was slain,  
A truth which old mythologists maintain.”

These lines (which, by the bye, are not very Homeric, either in their rythm or power,) are supposed to have been the production of some, unlettered, village poet ; and wholly owe their preservation to their being copied by the “learned Broome,”—as Philips calls him in his poem on Cider,—a gentleman who was one of those who assisted Pope in translating the *Odyssey*, and who, also, had contemplated writing a history of the County of Hereford, for which he had gathered a great mass of material ; it is

said, too, that he actually began such a work, but finally not only wholly abandoned his original intention, but also, from some chagrin or other cause, not divulged, was himself the means of destroying every vestige of whatever he had collected for such purpose.\* The birth-place of Broome was at Ewithington Mansion, in the parish of Withington, near Hereford; and thus, no doubt, why, in connection with his literary tastes, he was first led to think of compiling a history of his native county. The lines on the Mordiford Dragon, were, no doubt, a portion of such memoranda as he had collected for the work mentioned, and hence, along with its other matter, to contain some account of this dragon: and although such account might not have been in every particular—"as to date and circumstance"—satisfactory, still the tale as it was then known among the inhabitants of Mordiford would have been rendered in faithful accordance with this knowledge, and, as such, must have insured satisfaction, in long after times, to all true lovers of our legendary literature.

Having spoken of Mr. Bird as the party to whom I am indebted for my knowledge of these verses by Broome, I hope I may be here allowed to express, also, my acknowledgments to Mr. T. T. Davies, bookseller, of Hereford, for the source of my second piece of information on the same Mordiford Dragon. This book-loving as well as book-selling

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\* A Mr. R. Walwyn, who issued a string of printed queries, in 1749, with the view of getting together such information as he could respecting the county, thus speaks of this regretful result:—"Nor should I have been so presumptuous, had the late ingenious Mr. Broome, of Ewithington, thought proper to have let his papers see the light: he was, I may say, born to the task, and the destruction of his collection is a loss never enough to be lamented by the lovers of all Antiquarian Studies in general, and of this County in particular."—*The Allen Col. Mis. Pap. fol.* There is a notice, too, by Leland, in his Preface (p. xxvii.) to Langtoft's Chronicle, of a similar bearing.

tradesman, inheriting from his father (who had long done so before him) the praiseworthy desire of seeking after, purchasing, and preserving whatever he may consider useful as illustrative of the past and present,—the *present* which will yet become the *past*,—of the city and county of Hereford, is a notable example of how much may be achieved by individual pride and exertion towards the ultimate enrichment of Local History. His collection, in this way, is both excellent and extensive; and, what is still more, he is no narrow-minded miser in his custody of these riches, but (as I know from experience, and for which I hope I shall always retain a pure and due estimation) is ever ready to allow the free consultation of any book or other document he may possess, as also to give his advice as to the most eligible channels of further inquiry.†

To Mr. Davies, then, as has been before stated, and in proof of what I have just been remarking, I am likewise

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† While stating these acknowledgments, I would also crave allowance to add a few others; and the more so, as not only the thing will be gratifying to myself, but may have some ulterior good effects. First, then, I may at once say that I likewise enjoy permission to visit and make use of the books in the Hereford Permanent Library; and as many of these, for my present purposes, and especially the fine local collection made by Mr. John Allen, are most valuable, this accordance of the president, Dr. Bull, and the members, with my wishes, cannot be too highly appreciated. To the reading room of the Hereford Mechanics' Institute—an institution so gracefully presided over by no less a name than that of the able and extensively informed proprietor of Goodrich Court, Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick—I have been made like welcome; and I may also say the same with respect to the few times I have gone, for the purpose of research, to the somewhat similar establishment—the St. Peter's Reading Association; an association now in the eleventh year of its existence, and which still progresses very satisfactorily under the successful auspices of its founder—the Rev. J. Venn. In the old periods of our country's history, a journeyman shoemaker could not make these acknowledgments, but now the case is altered, and long may the change be continued, and to the most beneficial results; for Knowledge, while it levels, must necessarily lift, all.

obliged for directing my attention to some account of the Dragon of Mordiford, as given in a volume written by a Mr. George Lipscomb, a gentleman who made a tour into South Wales at the close of the last century, and which account I shall transcribe, as the passages will be found beginning at page the 75th. The account in question, though the fullest, is not, however, as it may be necessary to remark, the earliest ; Mr. Samuel Ireland, in his once very popular, and beautiful, volume, called " Views on the Wye," having given some particulars of the story a few years preceding the date of Lipscomb's Tour. The statement, notwithstanding, of the latter gentleman being, on the whole, much the best, is here preferred. Mr. Lipscomb says :—

" The church belonging to this village (Mordiford) stands near the bank of the river Lug, and the east end is decorated with a painting of a large green dragon. An ornament so unusual, and so seemingly unconnected with the nature and design of a place of worship, naturally excited our curiosity, which, after some inquiries, was gratified by the following story.

" At a remote period, very far beyond the memory of man, and very obscurely ascertained by tradition, there lived in the woody steep not far from Mordiford, a monster with prodigious wings, which committed various and alarming depredations among the cattle, and even the inhabitants of this neighbourhood. The monster was wont to resort to a particular spot for the purpose of allaying his thirst, and this was at the confluence of the Wye and the Lug. Many and great were the rewards which the good people of Mordiford offered to any one who should destroy the dragon ; but, it seems, that no man was found of sufficient courage to engage in so perilous an adventure.

At length, a malefactor, who had been condemned to die, undertook to kill the serpent, and relieve the Mordifordians from their daily and nightly fears, on condition of receiving his pardon, as the reward of his valour and prowess. The condition being accordingly granted, the hero concealed himself in a barrel at the water's edge, and lay in ambush for his dreadful foe. The wiles of the serpent being thus overcome, when he came to drink, as usual, the contest began, and lasted for a considerable time, but at length terminated fatally to both parties—the monster being slain outright by fair fighting, and the man poisoned by the dragon's breath.

“This story is told with great seriousness, and confidently believed, in all its particulars, by hundreds, and perhaps by thousands of persons, whose fathers and grandfathers have handed it down to them, without even attempting to divest it of the absurdities which oppose its credibility.

“They further will tell you that the figure on the wall of the church represents the exact size of the dragon, which must have been, at least, twelve feet long. Its head is depicted of a very large size, with a terrible aspect, a red mouth, and a forked tongue.

“We observed to the persons who related this curious history, that it was extraordinary the nature of the weapons which the man used for the destruction of the monster should have been unknown, and it was rather an impolitic contrivance for the nature of the engagement to be left to the precarious issue of single combat, when the *posse committatus* might have been easily assembled to subdue so dreadful a pest. But traditionary legends of this nature will not admit of much reasoning, nor stand the test of minute investigation. The ridiculous improbabilities with

which they are interwoven render it very difficult, and often impossible, to obtain any knowledge of the real fact on which they were originally founded. There is no doubt that long established customs and old legends refer to some real event, however that event may be clouded with ignorance, or darkened by superstition ; and it is possible that there may have been a monster variety of the serpent species among the thick woods above mentioned ; but whether it was in reality so terrible, and in appearance so unusual, as it is represented, cannot be ascertained, more than the truth of the rest of the story can be proved.

“ A trivial variation was made by a gentleman of Hereford in describing the dragon of Mordiford, namely, that it was an amphibious animal left on the bank of the Lug after a considerable flood ; and, indeed, if it were really a snake, and of *the size* insisted upon, it might well have been conceived sufficiently frightful without the forked tongue, webbed feet, and expansive wings, with which terror and credulity have aggravated the picture.”

Our author, I may here observe, makes no mention of the story as related in the first of the verse-versions, which will accompany this Prefatory History. This is one of my own picking up during a ramble in the locality concerned ; and, as such, in true self esteem, it has received the prior place of honour. It is, too, as I consider, the most feasible, and, therefore, engaging version, having nothing of either the barrel absurdity about it, as related in the second, nor the mere commonplace of the third, as regards the often-vaunted finding of such monstrosities as stranded whales, sharks, sea lions and horses, American sea serpents, and Hebridian mermaids ! This version, besides, has the advantage, in its main fact, of being supported by first-rate historical evidence—evi-



dence of the closest affinity, and to be adduced, (which is extremely fortunate,) from a very near neighbourhood. My authority, then—which, in this case, is taken from Rudder's History of Gloucestershire—saith thus :—

“ In the parish of Deerhurst, near Tewkesbury, a serpent of a prodigious bigness was a great grievance to all the country, by poisoning the inhabitants and killing their cattle. The inhabitants petitioned the king, and a proclamation was issued out, that whosoever should kill the serpent, should enjoy an estate in the parish, which then belonged to the crown. One John Smith, a labourer, engaged in the enterprise. He put a quantity of milk in a place to which the serpent resorted, who gorged the whole, agreeable to expectation, and lay down to sleep in the sun, with his scales ruffled up. Seeing him in that situation, Smith advanced, and striking between the scales with his axe took off his head. The Smiths enjoyed the estate when Sir Robert Atkyns compiled this account; and Mr. Lane, who married a widow of that family, had then the axe in his possession.”

In this extract, then, have we not the most satisfactory proof that Dragons, even like the wisest of men, may sometimes be caught *napping*? The descendants of the bold-hearted Gloucestershire labourer, John Smith, as our history averreth, caught and conquered one in this its suspicionless position; while Sir Robert Atkyns, a most veracious specimen of knightism, no doubt, *knew* the man who married a widow of the family of the Smiths; and which honourably descended widow brought along with her, as part of her second marriage jointure, the very axe that had destroyed the said sleeping dragon. Here, in a “plain, unvarnished” statement like this, is all that can be needful to corroborate, in the fullest manner, the truth

of the Mordiford achievement, as given in the particular version to which reference has been made.

What, too, is the statement of the poet whose lines have been copied by Broome? He says that the dragon was "slain at *Eastwood*," not at either the Lug or Wye, and by a mere barrel skulker, but openly and courageously, in the scene of its own glory; the victor seeking no other advantage than the very allowable one, in a contest of such unequal probabilities, of making his first onslaught when it might be asleep.\*

Nor is this all the proof that can be advanced towards the greater credibility of the exploit in question. The people in Mordiford, even to the tiniest school boy or girl, will still, if required, point out to the inquisitive stranger the "Serpent Lane"—the very lane up which it was wont to go to its sleeping den, and down which, at other times, it would come to sport and bathe itself—and perhaps, too, to create an appetite, as also to find something to satisfy

\*The ancient Knight of Chivalry—he whose whole active life was devoted to the rescue of "fayre ladyes" from enchanted castles, and the undertaking of all other perilous and dangerous deeds—would not, however, it must be admitted, degrade himself to even this very sensible precaution. An abstract of a relation of this sort is given by Lady Charlotte Guest, in her beautiful, and richly annotated, volume, "*The Mabinogion*" (being *Tales of Ancient Wales*). It is there said (p. 227), in one of the foot-notes, that "Percival de Galles, the Peredur ab Evrawe of Welsh Romance, came one day into a valley where a lion was fighting with a serpent which had carried off one of his whelps;" when thus the story goes on, in the words of the old authority she quotes:—"Syr Percyval thoughte to helpe the lyon, for he was the more naturel beeste, of the two, and there with he drewe his suerd, and sette hys shelde afore hym, and ther he gaf the serpent suche a buffet that he had a dedely wound." "On this, says her ladyship, describing the issue of the adventure, 'the lion, grateful for the 'service he (Syr Percival) had done him, fauned upon him 'as a spaniel,' and having conveyed his whelp in safety to his lair, returned to Sir Percival, and followed him.'" In the same work we are also told how Peredur slew the "Black Serpent of the Carn," which had a most appalling reputation.

that appetite upon—in the Lug or the Wye, for both these rivers were, at this particular place, immediately at its option. There, to this day, is the veritable lane so called, winding upward in a hollow between the hills, and commencing not far from the back of the church. This I traversed myself, and a most ill-boding road it still is—miry, narrow (just, as it were, of dragon breadth!) and now paved—if paving such workmanship may be called—in places, with all sorts of the most carelessly chosen stones—stones which might shake every joint even in the flexible body of a dragon itself.

The second, or “Battle of the Barrel” version is, however, the one most usually received. This almost everybody in Mordiford, Hereford, and throughout the shire generally, has heard related in some way or other; and although Lipscomb, as the tale was told to him about half a century ago, throws doubt upon it, because of the “nature of the weapons” employed, and likewise of the “impolitic contrivance” of only sending one man—death-doomed as he was—to combat the dragon, while the strength of the whole Mordifordian community ought to have been tested to the same purpose; yet, with respect to the weapons, what would this author say if he were living now? In his account—and this is somewhat strange, considering, probably, what he intended as some most sage remarks, founded on his own statement—there is no information whatever of the precise nature of any sort of weapons, nor, indeed, of any weapon at all; but at present, as the tale is commonly heard, this is not the case, for we are now currently told that it was with a gun the man shot at and killed the dragon, placing the muzzle of the piece at the bung-hole of the barrel, and thence discharging the leaden contents of the deadly instrument at the foe!

I deeply suspect, however, that the old chatterer, Tradition, is, in this case, sadly at fault, and has lost all the healthiness of its earlier memory, as neither gun, nor yet gunpowder, was invented in the dragon-age of the world; and, as such, in my versification of this version, I have wholly passed over the gun shooting manœuvre, and given, in place, to the hero some sort of blade weapon—let it be called sword, dagger, lance, or by any other name.

It is related, also, by some, in connection with this same version of the story, that the man had so prepared the barrel for a resolute defence, that its appearance, when placed at anchor on the Lug, was most formidable. It was bristled all over with long, sharp pointed pieces of the best manufactured steel, so that when the dragon, in its anger, began to furiously lash on the offensive object with its tail, it thus was the means of wounding itself in most frightful manner. Indeed, one of the forms of the tale goes so far to say, that the dragon found itself at last so exhausted from this fruitless self-sacrificing endeavour, that it was compelled to give up the siege of this wooden tenement as hopeless, and retired blood covered, weak, and dispirited to the near adjoining bank of the river, where it lay moaning and moveless, when now the man boldly came forth in full assurance of victory, made rapidly towards the monster, and soon killed it outright. Here, too, it was (when the combatants were in this close proximity with each other) that the dragon, in its horrible spite at the triumph thus about to be obtained over it, making a last desperate exertion, lifted up its head, and poured out upon its now all hope-ate assailant the final effort of its pestilential breath, when the two fell dead together!

This is pretty plausible, much more so than the senseless detail furnished by Mr. Ireland, where it is most ri-

diculously asserted that the hero "achieved his purpose by slaying the dragon as he (the man) was *solacing* himself in a cider hogshead." Just as at such a time, and with such a foe, it was possible to feel so very much at ease as thus to turn such a dangerously bombarded barrel into a mere boozing snugger, and there, at the leisure of the inebriated inmate, to have so jocosely (as we must suppose) *squirted* his powerful opponent out of existence with apple-juice! Besides, Mr. Ireland should have known that Herefordshire (whatever it has been for this two or three hundred years last past), was no cider county at the early period when either the dragon or crocodile species were known to exist in England; nor, yet, for many, many long centuries afterwards. This is even worse than the gun anachronism above noticed.\*

The last, or third version, in addition to Lipscomb's authority, I have heard myself. My informant in this case was a humble fisherman—one who appeared to follow the occupation as an occasional means of "winning the wages of the day." He had come that morning from the neighbourhood of Fownhope, for the purpose of trying his luck in that part of the Lug contiguous to its junction with the Wye, and here I seduced him into conversation. He

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\* Mr. Ireland has also committed himself in other instances. He states that "about a mile from the bank of the Wye, this river [the Lug] runs through the pleasant village of Mordiford;" whereas the distance is scarcely a quarter of a mile; nor does it run *through* Mordiford at all, but *by* it, on the Hereford side. With Lipscomb, he likewise commits the mistake—as will be hereafter be shown—of placing the dragon-painting on the *east* instead of the *west* end of the church. In the generality of books, too, bearing on this locality, the error is found of making Hereford and Mordiford further asunder than what they are. From the way Ireland has written, a reader might suppose this distance to be "about six miles," though it is little better than four. See, for a confirmation, "Views on the Wye," p. 60.

seemed to know all about Mordiford, for he had evidently been often there—perchance was a native; could name every hill in the vicinity, the principal inhabitants, and when the Lug experienced its greatest floodings. It was at the time, he said, of some one of these early floods—long now out of memory—when the serpent was overcome; and pity it was, he added, that it had not been killed long before; but, then, he quickly replied to, or asked of himself—*who could do it?* The Lug, he continued, has still its mighty over-flowings; it is slow to rise; but when it does rise, it is then most difficult for it to get itself down again; for in this particular it is very different from the Wye; and even now and here, he further said—looking all the time he spoke most watchfully at the tremulous movements of the point of his fishing-rod—the water is a good six or eight feet in depth, though as yet we have had so little rain, and could thus well enough swim any such large creature as that serpent is reported to have been. At this moment a bulky sized otter was seen diving forward from the dark, bushy bank near where we stood, and thus, in some degree, seemed to realize the thorough fitness of the Lug, and especially in former periods, for its harbourage of all sorts of monsters of “ugly birth.”

In regard to such monstrous creatures, what says Lord Brougham?—“In these curious inquiries,” observes his lordship, in his *Discourse on Natural Theology*—and referring to the changes which this our habitable globe has already undergone—“we are conversant not merely with the world before the flood, but with a world which, in far earlier ages, had been the habitation of birds, and beasts, and reptiles. We are carried, as it were, several worlds back, and we reach a period when all was water, and slime, and mud; and the waste without either men or

plants, gave resting place to enormous beasts like lions, and elephants, and river-horses, while the water was tenanted by lizards the size of a whale, sixty or seventy feet long, and by others with huge eyes, having shields of solid bone to protect them, and glaring from a neck ten feet in length, and the air was darkened by flying reptiles covered with scales, opening the jaws of the crocodile, and expanding wings, armed at the tips with the claws of the leopard."

How easy is it, then, after reading this very eloquently written passage, and duly reflecting on the facts it discovers, to surmise that, even long after man was called to take his station upon this earth, some lingering remains of that monster-brood of things which are therein mentioned still kept possession of such of the more suitable situations as could be maintained for their safety and provender ; and that the wild wood and water neighbourhood of Mordiford was, in verity, one of these very spots so made choice of ; and, hence, of the most dangerous vicinity to the pristine germinations of such portions of the human family as might be thrown upon the same place, to hunt the desert, or venture upon the wide, fordless river, for their daily means of supplying existence. This seems no unlikely conjecture ; and, therefore, it may not be altogether very prudent, or wisdom-showing, to make continual laughter of all such out-of-the-way relations as have come down to present times, of either dragons, wiverns, unicorns, salamanders, the great bird spoken of in the eastern tale of Sinbad — or what not beside, of those now extinct wonders of some of the early conditions of our globe. In the manifold discoveries which, of late years, the geologist has been the means of making, some of the most surprising facts of this character have been

brought to light, of the monster productions of former times—of huge compactly-built mountains of flesh and bone, thrice the size of the elephant, and of others of the species of lizards, as Lord Brougham says, “sixty or seventy feet in length.”\*

Notwithstanding all these discoveries, we, of the present race of man, are still, however, in a great degree, a most unbelieving class. We have come to doubt of almost

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\* One of these long extinct monsters, the *Dinotherium* (the name coming from a compound of two Greek words, signifying a *fearfully large animal*), is thus described by Professor Ansted in his book called “The Ancient World; or Picturesque Sketches of Creation:”—“Its length was nearly twenty feet, its body huge and barrel-shaped, very much resembling that of the hippopotamus, being little raised above the ground, although the huge columns which formed its legs are supposed to have been nearly ten feet in length.” (p. 295). And thus, too, the same authority, (in another of his works, his “Geology” (vol. 2, p. 78), in giving an account of the different fossil reptiles which have been found in that particular, and extensively spread, formation, which, in the language of the geologist, is called *London Clay*), says,—not as conjecture, but as matter of fact, from an examination of such serpentine remains as have at various times, and in various places been found—that “The serpent of the London Clay appears to have been of large size, and of the proportions of the Boa Constrictor, which it resembles in some interesting points of anatomical detail. The dimensions of some of the vertebræ indicate an animal more than eleven feet in length, which, probably, preyed on living birds and quadrupeds; and it is certain that no serpents of such dimensions and habits exist in the present day, except in warm tropical regions. Other fragments would seem to warrant the conclusion that serpents of a much larger size were also in existence at the same period.” While, in the same page, he likewise observes—“The Crocodilians found also in the London Clay, have their analogies rather with the species living in the Island of Borneo, than with the better known and more common crocodile of the Nile.” Thus, then, we had not only formerly in England monstrous serpents, but monstrous crocodiles as well—crocodiles of the Cambrian *Lug* as well as of the Egyptian *Nile*: and who can gainsay but the Pest of Mordiford was some such thing—be it called serpent, dragon, crocodile, or worm;—the huge and cruel “Worm of Lampton,” to wit?—for such relations are known from south to north, in Cumberland as well as in Kent; and are deeply wound up with our most early literature. “The fens and wilds” writes the extensively read Mr. Thomas Wright, in one of the latest of his many erudite volumes, “are, in *Beowulf*, [an ancient Saxon poem, so named], constantly peopled by troops of elves, and nickers, and worms, (dragons and serpents).”



every possible thing—to doubt of even a Hell or a Heaven! and even to attempt to show *reasons* (as they are called) for these most dreadful doubts. Our ancient “world of wonders” we are rapidly losing all faith in—of either the *one-eyed* or *hundred-handed* human existences of old times—of Amazonian women—of centaurs, creatures half man and half beast—and even of that most engaging of all wolf stories, the wolf that suckled the great first founder and lawgiver of Rome. An author of the name of Niebuhr, of Italian birth—and, therefore, the greater his shame—and dignified by many as one of the most painstaking and clear-sighted of historians, has been at mighty pains to “cast to the dogs” the above-mentioned so long venerated story of the first beginning of the magnificent City of the Seven Hills.

Proof, too, of the same most lamentable disposition may be advanced in respect to the present subject of the Dragon of Mordiford. Lipscomb, in his way, has attempted something of the kind, though towards the conclusion of his observations he appears to have become partially ashamed of his conduct; where he supposes, that “long-established customs and old legends may refer to some real event, however that event may be clouded with ignorance, or darkened by superstition.” The like censure may also be advanced against the Rev. John Duncomb (a man whose very profession ought to have taught him the necessity of inculcating, in all ways and at all times, the most exuberant faith), in his History of Herefordshire. In this work, (vol. i. p. 31) I find the following passage, where, it will be observed, he takes the most sly method to make a murderous plunge at the whole story of the Mordiford Dragon.

“Soon after this period,” he says, speaking of the year

448, " Uther, surnamed Pendragon, was chief of the Silures: the cognomen was probably acquired by some signal exertion of valour under the insignia of the dragon, which was common to the banners of all the British chiefs, and was a sacred symbol amongst them, and many other nations of antiquity. The dragon is not only often mentioned in various records, but respect has been shown towards it in several places by particular customs, some of which exist even to this day (1804). Thus, the supposed form of a dragon has been described and renewed on the west side of the church at Mordiford, in this county, from time immemorial. At Burford, in Oxfordshire, the inhabitants formerly made an annual procession through the town on Midsummer Eve, carrying before them the figure of a dragon, in allusion to the banner of Ethelbert, King of Mercia, between whom and Cuthred, or Cerdic, King of the West Saxons, there was a great battle in that vicinity, A. D., 752. And afterwards, at the battle of Essedown, in Essex, A. D., 1008, Edmund Ironside is said to have shown ' his prowess ; and, forsaking his place, which was between the dragon and the standard, he entered the armie of his enemies (the Danes), and compelled the prowdest of them to turn their backs.' "

Now, what is to be gathered from all this, very feasible as it is, but the throwing of the deepest doubt upon the veraciousness of this dragon affair altogether ? while I feel somewhat concerned to say, that even the present worthy Rector of Mordiford seems to be of a similar opinion. It is his surmise, that the origin of the dragon painting on the church may be fairly said to belong to the age and agency of this same Uther, who is reported to have been the father of the still more famous King Arthur, of Round Table reputation. In some time during the terrible strife

which was so long continued between the ancient British race and their Saxon invaders and oppressors, he imagines that the high and woody region of Mordiford, situate so eligibly to the two fine rivers of the Wye and the Lug, is most likely to have been a position of importance for all belligerent purposes ; and that Uther's forces being stationed within the different commanding fastnesses of such a neighbourhood, and he having obtained certain victories in consequence, some symbol of the portentous standard from which he acquired his warrior cognomen, and under which he fought, was, as an acknowledgment, either put up within or on the outside of the then religious temple of the vicinity ; and hence, in the truth-upswallowing lapse of time, when the real fact of the case became forgotten, the imaginations of the inhabitants, being left at full liberty to find for the figure, as still so conspicuously displayed in, or on, their church, some other cause than that which had passed away from recollection, went on to invent those various ways of the story which have already been detailed \*

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\* The inquiring reader will, no doubt, feel some gratification, to be put, at this place, in possession of a very singular relation concerning the origin of the cognomen given to Uther ; while in justice to the opinions, as above stated, of both Mr. Duncomb and Mr. Bird, the same should be made known. This account I find in the Rev. Peter Roberts's translation of *The Chronicles of the Kings of Great Britain*, from the original Welsh of Tysilleo—the famous “History,” so called, of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Emerys, the late king, and to whom Uther was brother, having been slain in combating with the invaders of his country, we are next told, (Uther being absent, and, therefore unconscious of such a disaster) that “at this time a star of amazing size appeared. It had one beam, and on the head of the beam was a ball of fire resembling a dragon ; and from the jaws of the dragon two beams ascended, the one towards the extremity of France, and the other towards Ireland, sub-dividing itself into seven small beams. Uther and all around him alarmed by such an appearance, inquired of the learned men what it might portend. Merddyn [the famous prophet Merlin of English history], bursting into tears,

All this may seem very probable and excellent conjecture ; though, as one surmise is generally as good as another, and especially when these are truly, and in whole, nothing but surmises, I must still give it as the result of my own most impartially exercised judgment, that either of the stories as told about the actual killing of the dragon or serpent is quite as worthy of credence as is the Pendragon supposition. Moreover (and this remark I have thus kept back purposely to the present moment, being well aware, as I was, of the prudence of not exhausting all the means of a properly effective defence at the outset of any disputable subject, of the very extraordinary character of the one now

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exclaimed, "Sons of Britain, ye have suffered an irrecoverable loss, ye are widowed of Emrys the Great. But still ye have a king. Haste thou therefore, Uther, and engage the enemy, for the whole island shall be thine ; for it is thou, Uther, who is signified by this star with the head of a dragon. By the beam pointing over France is denoted a son of thine, who shall be great in wealth, and extensive in sway, and by that directed towards Ireland, a daughter, whose sons and grandsons shall successively govern the world." Thus encouraged, Uther, though he thought it a vision, engaged the enemy, and after a battle long doubtful, at length was victorious, and drove Pasgen and Gilla-mori to their ships with great slaughter. After the victory Uther returned to Winchester to inter his brother. Thither also came all the archbishops, 'bishops,' and abbots, and 'laymen of rank,' of the island ; and Emrys was buried within the circle of the Heroes, and near the monastery of Ambri. Those who were present were invited by Uther, and by their common consent he was crowned King, the crown of sovereignty being put on his head. Uther recollecting the words of Merddyn, when the ceremony was over, commanded two dragons of gold, and of exquisite workmanship, to be made, in form similar to that which he had seen on the head of the comet's beam of light. *One of these he deposited at the principal church at Winchester [this, in connection with the dragon on Mordiford church is remarkable] ; the other he made his standard to be carried before the army. From this circumstance he was thenceforward called Uther Pendragon, (Uther of the DRAGON'S HEAD.)* "From this passage," observes the translator, in a note, "I am tempted to believe that Stonehenge was a Dracantium, and that from the appearance of the comet before the coronation of Uther, the occasion was taken, by converting the circumstance into an omen, and inducing him to bear the image of a serpent on his standard to attach Uther to the religion of the temple, and constitute him its patron." See further, at this place (p. 132) on the subject ; as, also, in the Additional Notes, p. 359.

under review ;)—the reader, moreover, must not forget the memorable lines before quoted—those lines where the writer says, in real chronicle fashion, and seemingly with the fullest consciousness of the truth of his statement, that the dragon was “slain by Garstone’s hand ;” thus making known to all future time the very plebian-like patronymic of the hero who effected this most wonderful deliverance for the sadly afflicted people of Mordiford.

Now, who was this great “noble of nature ?” Who was this Garstone ? Who but the condemned malefactor of tradition ! He had been arraigned, no doubt, at the bar of justice, under this name, for some high misdemeanour ; and as the whole world still remembers the name of a Thurtel, a Burke, a Courvoisier, a Ravallac, or a Guido Faux, so the same by that of Garstone. The people of Mordiford could by no possibility ever have forgotten the stout-hearted and stout-handed man, criminal though he was, whom they had commissioned to battle with their terrible dragon enemy, and who did so battle, and, still better than all—came off the victor !\*

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\* It is a curious fact that there are at present several individuals of the name of Garstone in Hereford ; and also still more interesting to know that the Garstone family have been long connected with Mordiford—all being descendants, no doubt, of the great dragon-killer. The following information, in answer to an inquiry I made from Mr. Bird, on this subject, is conclusive :—“In reply to your letter, I beg to state, that persons of the name of Garstone, or Garston, formerly resided here, but not for some years past. The memorials in the churchyard record the deaths of four between the years 1742 and 1767. In an ancient Terrier, a Garstone’s Gift is recorded, to the poor, of 4s. 8d. He gave £4 ;—the date of the Terrier, 1708. In the Inquiry into the Charities, 27th of Charles 2, 1675, Thos. Garstone is said to have given to the poor, £5. In Return of Charities, 26 George 3, 1786, William Garstone is mentioned as having given a rent-charge, invested in the Rectory of Mordiford, of 4s. 8d. (This payment is made by me at the present time.) From these items I presume the Garstones were of some notoriety here in former times : one of them (Thomas) is described as a kinsman of Silvanus Woodhill, a rector of Mordiford, who died in 1749.”

Pendragon himself—puissant, valorous, and famous, as he might have been in his way—was surely nothing in comparison to a hero like Garstone?—he, who, like another St. George, adventured single-handed to encounter the most dreadful assailant—winged, scaly-sided, forked-tongued, and poison-breathing! Even to this hour we still hear of its fell powers of poisoning. How, when it used to come to disport itself in the adjacent waters, it was sure to so contaminate the stream for a time, that all the fish therein, or whosoever drank or washed themselves in the same, immediately died from the effects! Nor is even this part of these traditionary tellings to be doubted; for in the relation heretofore copied about the Tewkesbury Dragon, we are told that it possessed and made constant use of the like power and propensity. Indeed, the poisonous qualities of a dragon's breath has become proverbial;\* and, therefore, how are we to feel surprised that the lion-hearted Garstone, after destroying his foe in the noble manner he did, should, in turn, be destroyed by it, as its last desperate endeavour?—ashamed, probably, as it was, to resort to such expedient in any prior part of the encounter, the puny biped antagonist it was pitted against appeared so really contemptible to its hitherto unopposed will.

Reviewing, then, thus again, all these facts, along with their many subsidiary probabilities, it must by this time, as I should suppose, be the conviction of every sane-minded

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\* A fact of this sort is thus spoken of in the *Chronicle of the Kings of Norway* (vol. 1, p. 402):—"And when he came near to the land he went to the side of Iceland, north around the land, where he saw all the mountains and hills full of land-serpents, some great, some small. When he came to Vapnafiord he went towards the land, intending to go on shore; but a huge dragon rushed down the dale with a train of serpents, paddocks, and toads, that blew poison towards him."

reader, that the story of the Mordiford Dragon is, in all its main features, at least, no mere fiction, and ought not to be longer considered so by any individual whatever. Everybody still talks of the circumstance in some way or other ; the interesting story about the manner in which the dragon was, if I may so call it, *nursed*, has already been detailed ; and we are still—and as it always has been the case—shown the “Serpent Lane” from whence the death-dealing monster was accustomed to sally forth, at its own unmolested pleasure, either for drinking, recreation, or in quest of whatever prey it might best fancy at the time.

In regard, however, to the uniform taking of such a journey, merely for the purpose of slaking the thirst of the terrible devastator, it is but justice here to make known an (apparently) very sensible observation that was made to me on this subject by the present sexton of Mordiford. This worthy, though very humble, servant of the Church—unlike sextons in general—seems to take a most proper pride in his profession ; for while he can, like the solitary informant whom Byron met with at the grave of Churchill, discourse, in broken histories, of those whom he is the means of depositing safely in their “last sleeping places,” he has, also, aspirations beyond this, and has made himself conversant, through the possession of a certain pair of books of the value, at least, of some three or four guineas — “Duncomb’s History of Herefordshire”—of all that is worth knowing about his own native county. I mention this trait to show the intellectual leanings of the man, and therefore to obtain for his opinion the greater respect. It is his tatement, then, that the common belief of the dragon making continual use of the path spoken of for the purpose of drinking is not strictly maintainable ; for, as he says, that water for any such object might have been had a great

deal nearer—from a much smaller stream that takes its way, down the near side of Eastwood, and called in “history,” as he said, the *river* Pentaloe. At certain junctures, indeed, this tiny hill-stream might justly enough be called a “river ;” though at the time I saw it—in the early part of the by-gone September, and I suspect that it is generally the same, or near about it—it was anything but a river—a mere rivulet. In the year 1811, as a tablet records, which is placed in a niche on the south side within the church, the Pentaloe experienced a very unusual flooding, from the discharge of one of those singular operations of nature—a water-spout. This fell near the source of the Pentaloe, and hence the volume of the stream became swelled to a tremendous height, overrunning the deepest gutterings of its bed, and committing much havoc, tearing down all in its way, to the wholesale destruction of both life and property. The Pentaloe, notwithstanding, could not always go on at this rate : water-spouts are not the occurrences of every day ; and therefore, though river it may be called, it is not, in any sense, worthy of such a name ; nor yet can it be said to be a fitting place for a dragon to go to drink at, or to cool itself in, and especially in the hot weather of the long summer, when its greedy feastings would require equally as greedy water libations, and its frame the most plentiful bathings.

This much, then, I have also thought it might be requisite to make known, lest the same sexton, on the going of other visitors to Mordiford, should tell to them the same statement, and they, eagerly catching at its apparent truthfulness, so use it as one of the means to cast an undeserved discredit on the entire of these dragonian stories. Being as these pages are intended to be, the only proper account of the whole affair, and in this way to be the main source



of all after reference, and have I aimed to clear up every mystification, and thus that the great achievement of the courageous Garstone should be always held in the highest esteem.

And now, in conclusion of all this, I must yet add some other remarks. These will be on the painting of the dragon which is mentioned by both Lipscomb and Duncomb, and also in my own verses, as being *still* to be seen on the church at Mordiford. This is not, however, strictly speaking, at present the fact; for at the last extensive reparation which the church underwent, between thirty and forty years ago, the so long-venerated, and kept-up, figure of the dragon was most sacrilegiously destroyed—perhaps in dread of the expense of retouching the Green Monster up in a way deserving its reputation; or perhaps the Mordiford Churchwardens of that period were so anti-Popishly inclined, that every memorial pertaining to the *superstition* of the old times of Romanism was then and ever after to be discarded.\*

But however this was, and still, in a degree, may continue to be, the great majority of the British nation at present are every day, more or less, exhibiting an extreme

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\* “Mordiford church had become dilapidated, and was under repair from March 25th, 1810, to Sept. 6th, 1812; during which period the dragon on the Pine of the West End must have been erased.”—*Note from Mr. Bird*.—It is strange that the Rev. W. J. Rees, in the last edition of his *Guide*, 1827, though he mentions the repairs above spoken of, takes no notice of the destruction of the dragon, but describes it, as in the earlier editions, as still existing on the church. This evinces much carelessness; and cannot, considering his local position, be made excuseable. To the writer of the county accounts, in Pigot’s well-known publication, another sort of blame is to be attached. He says, the dragon was not demolished ‘till 1814, when the present stone tower of the church was made to replace the prior “antiquated wooden spire,” on which was “visible the figure of a dragon.” But, perhaps, he only meant some wind-vane of this semblance, as we see so commonly is the case in the form of the cock. No wonder “fact” is so little respected, when it requires such trouble to find it.

passion towards making extraordinary "revivals." Old churches and cathedrals in all places—and the Cathedral of Hereford among the rest—are now being actively done up in their pristine characters: cross-legged warriors, and cross-bearing tombs of mitred bishops and archbishops, and cross-decorated towers, as well, are all, once more, starting into splendid consequence. And the same may be said of almost every species of renovation: the windows of God's temples are again, as in former times, made to teach, through the gratified orifices of vision, the most sacred of mysteries, and also at the same time to so subdue and disperse the incoming rays of the great orb of heaven, as to make every devotee who may be witness of the full effects of this most beautiful mastery of the colour-disposing artist, feel quickened to wonderment and worship. The once fashionable relic-destroyer is now wholly worn out of fashion—his "occupation is gone," and carved saints', or hobgoblins', heads, be them in stone or timber, are most actively hunted up by both-church restorer and curiosity shop-dealer. The painting "on the wall" induces none of that terror which we read of in the Scriptures; nor yet that contempt which the historian speaks of in describing the hard matter-of-fact negations of the Puritan soldier. We have come round again to respect this paint; and though from a different motive to the Romanist, still it is respected. For a long period we were desperate white-washers; but now it is the loud cry of the day to wholly abandon this sepulchral desecration, be it in church, castle, palace, baronial hall—wherever, in short, religion and respectability may in-home themselves. The hovels of the poor are now alone to be whitewashed; our Sanitary Samaritans say so—the poor and the plague taking up their quarters together, and lime being a most excellent

wedge to force asunder the fellowship. Would to God it could wedge up the stomach as well! But lime is neither bred nor butter, nor yet beef; it cannot bring food, though it may chase away fever.\*

Well, but what, the reader will say, has this disquisition on lime to do with the Mordiford Dragon? Why, much. The painting "on the wall,"—that is, the Dragon, as painted on the church at Mordiford, was first scraped off, or white-washed out, as has already been said, sometime between the years 1810 and 1812. The skill of a Salamis

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\* The writer hopes that these (probably, to some,) dubious-like remarks, as bearing upon the now all-engrossing question of what is called *Sanitary Reform*, may not be taken as exhibitivive of sheer disrespect on his part to that active agitation which is at present making itself so manifest throughout the length and breadth of these kingdoms, on this great subject of legislative and municipal interference and superintendence. He has been too often compelled himself, in his various passages through life, to have much too close a knowledge of those pestiferous "huts in which poor men live," to feel any cause of lament at the prospect of their speedy emendation, on the cheap and morally beneficent score of *cleanliness*. All that he would stipulate for, is, that this outcry and exertion for a pure and plentiful supply of water—for effective sewerage—thorough white-washing, and all the other *et ceteras* of the case, should not cease or lag on the mere attainment of these ends, or even on the road to this attainment; but that the wealthy and the wise should concern themselves in like untiring manner in behalf of the carnivorous, as well as the cleanly, man. He who is in want of food can never be brought to feel a long esteem for water, for where there is no beef and cabbage, nor potatoes, to boil, his own eyes will ever be ready to supply much too great an abundance of this aqueous element. My working-class brethren have, indeed, in general, a sad "purgatory" of the stomach to pass through, on this side the grave;—a killing purgatory!—aye, a purgatory that destroys life itself! and that, too, in most rapid manner. What, on this subject, are the words of the humane and enlightened Marquis of Normanby? At a meeting lately held (Dec. 11) of the *Health of Towns' Association*, he made this terrible statement in relation to the fearful mortality among the poor:—"In St. Saviours, Southwark," he said, "(the most unhealthy of all parts of the metropolis), the average duration of life among the gentry was 47, tradesmen 25, artizans 22, whilst among the lowest class it did not exceed 15!" NOT EXCEED FIFTEEN!! From this, therefore, would it not seem that much more is required to make the average life of the artizan, and the lower than the artizan, exceed 22 and 15 years of age, than clean faces and white-washed walls? Assuredly, there is.

(whoever he was ? and wherever born ?) was entirely obliterated ; that noted Effigy which had so affectionately been kept up for so many centuries, was deliberately destroyed, and thereby all the hoary glory of the locality cast into nothingness ! But thirty-seven years ago, at the most, this criminality was effected,—the Dragon memorial outliving so long both the convulsions of the Reformation and the Commonwealth,—and yet but to perish at last in this our much-lauded nineteenth century, under a load of rubbishly lime ! May we not, however, in the better desirings and doings which are now so rapidly brightening upon us, expect to see a quick restoration of the Dragon ?—restored to the old church of the old village, that takes its ancient British name from its pleasant situation on the Lug and Wye ?\* Is not, too, the church a much better place for the display of any such effigy, than the house of the “publican and sinner,” as we not only find is the case here in Hereford, with our Green Dragon Inn, but elsewhere ?—these enticing to the most unseemly intemperance, while the former could not but awaken in the mind of every beholder some high sense of the great heroism of Humanity in overcoming danger, wherever the cause is really noble and virtuous.

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\* “Morddwyfford means the water, or sea of two ways or roads, a conflux being there.”—“Cymro,” in the *Hereford Times*, 25th Jan., 1840. In the postscript to a communication from Sir S. R. Meyrick, which will be given as an addendum at the end of the verses, he writes :—“I do not think that Morddwyffordd or Mordd wy Fordd is ‘the sea of two ways or roads,’ but the road where the water is full of motion, from the confluence. Mordd signifies ‘wavy or full of motion ;’ and Wy or Wye, as we name the river, simply ‘water.’”

In an after-note, in consequence of the haste in which the above definition was written and sent, Sir Samuel thus writes again :—“On reflection, I do not very much like the Welsh assigned to Morddwyfford. Should there be a ford at that place, I would rather have the last syllable a translation, and the two previous ones corruptions ; which I conceive to be more consonant to Welsh idiom : Rhyd-y-morddwy, *i.e.*, the ford of the agitated (or wavy) water. Hence we have in the parish of Goodrich, Llansford for Rhyd i'r

Let it, therefore, be as one among the many other hopes of the present age, in connection with this desire for revivals, the hope of all to see a revival of the Mordiford Dragon; and then that which is said both by Lipacomb and Duncomb, and in the verses herewith accompanying will remain true history,—the Dragon will be *still* where it ought to be! This, too, may be both very easily and satisfactorily accomplished. Mr. Bird, among his invaluable collection of drawings and engravings of the sacred and other edifices of Herefordshire and neighbouring counties, has one in which the Dragon is depicted in all its original truthfulness,—not as that slubberly, conger-like thing which, as I understand, was one of the latest ways in which some bungling painter from Hereford chose to perform his task (being probably led astray by Lipacomb's second account), but with all the dragon requisites in full glory: the spiteful tail twisted over the back, the wings flapping, the red mouth open, the forked tongue wrothfully protruded,—the whole head, in short, being of "terrible aspect," and the manner and action of the entire frame betraying the like deadly purpose and determination. The faithfulness, indeed, of the representation must

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lan, or the ford to the church. The Welsh for Oxford is Rhyd-ychen—Oxen-ford."—In an appendix by the Editor of the *Hereford Times*, he says, "Might not the derivations be partly Latin? *Mors*, death, in the genitive case, and *ford*, would make Mortiford, 'the ford of death;' a suitable name for the scene of the Dragon's slaughter."

I would just observe, in respect to the phrase—"should there be a ford at that place," in the second portion of Sir Samuel's definition, that this could never have been the case either with the Wye or Lug, at Mordiford, the depth of water in both rivers being always too great to have been made *fordable* in the manner usually meant by this word. There must, however, have been still some contrivance for crossing the latter river in the route to Hereford, either by some rude bridge-work, by horse conveyance, or passage-boat; and hence, no doubt, but the particular spot so made choice of, would be called the *ford*.

be carefully attended to in every particular,—the colour, as it ought to be, still kept of the true dragon character,—*green*. It was this colour when Lipscomb saw it, in 1799; and so, also, in Rees's Guide to Hereford, 1806. The same, too, is stated in Brayley and Britton's Herefordshire, 1805,\* where, after giving the substance of the story as told by Lipscomb, it is said, "In memory of this event, a large *green dragon*, with expanded wings, and web-footed, is painted on the east end of Mordiford Church." I have been told, however, notwithstanding the host of authority for the true colour, that at some period in the early part of the present century, the body of the figure was "done" in red, with the aim, no doubt, on the part of the painter, of making the representation more bloody or murderous-like; though how he continued to bestow the necessary contrast in the open, venom-breathing mouth, is difficult to conjecture, it being scarcely possible that he could have adventured to paint that ferocious inlet either white, black, or yellow! My informant could not remember about this particular in regard to the mouth, but the body, he was certain, was all red, and the legs thick, and bristled with scales.

In the small volume relating to Herefordshire, of Cooke's at one time so well known series of topographical publications, the outline of this Dragon memorial, we are told, was formed in plaster; Ireland says the same; and hence upon this plaster the colouring, red or green, was put, as its renewal was successively required through the injuries committed by the seasons.

It will be necessary, also, to caution in another particular,

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\* Being a portion of the well-known work called "The Beauties of England and Wales."

or a different sort of error may be committed in the revival contemplated. This is in regard to place. Ireland and Lipscomb alike state that the painting was on the *east* end of the church ; and in Brayley and Britton the same is asserted. As it is certain, however, that these companion writers only copied Lipscomb, so they blindly followed their authority in this, as in every other particular of the subject under notice. But here all are in error together, it not being true that the Dragon painting was where it is stated to be,—on the *east* end of the church,—but on the west, as described by Duncomb and Rees, who both must have seen it so often, and as also is represented in the drawing before spoken of, as in the possession of Mr. Bird, and in what Mr. Bird states himself in the note already given. Here, indeed, was its proper place, where all who passed over the old bridge of the Lug (the church situated close by, on the left hand side of the road), could not avoid having their attention called to the strangeness of the spectacle there exhibited.

That the Mordiford Dragon, then, as thus described, is no longer to be seen, must be the regret of every sincere respecter of local memorials and old venerations. Such regret, too, was very early felt, as one particular instance, before the conclusion of these remarks, deserves to be noticed.

The Dragon being demolished,—plaster, colour, webbed feet, wings, and all,—and no sign of a restoration taking place, or even being talked about, a letter was received, some few years after this demolition was effected, requesting to know from the Rector if he had any objection to see the Dragon reinstated in its glory ; the party writing offering to have it cut in either wood or stone, and duly set off with all the proper colours, at his own cost ? To

this the writer jocularly added, that he was sure that neither the rector nor his family, nor yet any in the parish, could prosper while the church was deprived of its proper ornament, and the wondrous story which that symbol was intended to make known so despised. To this application a consenting answer, as ought to be, was returned. But here, unhappily, the matter dropped ; the rector received no second communication, nor did he then know from whom he received the first, the writer merely speaking of himself as one who was as willing as able to do as he had proffered, and also as one who had long felt a deep interest in every undertaking creditable and advantageous to the county. The fact, however, soon after transpired. The request came from the Duke of Norfolk, who was then residing at his fine Herefordshire seat of Holme Lacy, and thus a near neighbour of Mr. Bird's and the Dragon, the breadth of the river Wye alone separating the Mordiford soil from that of the estate of his Grace. The Duke's death took place in the year 1815, not many months from the time he had written in his anonymous character to Mr. Bird ; and as it was with the Dragon, so with him,—he could neither follow up his *good* intentions when called to another world, nor could it any longer practise its *bad* ones after being so providentially cut off from the scene of its many guilty doings, near the Lug and the Wye, at Mordiford.

After all this, I have now further to request a continuance of the reader's attention to the verses which follow ; and thus to do with the subject, as we would by a beloved child—to let it go to sleep in the lullaby of a song.

Hereford, Cathedral Close, December, 1847.



# THE MORDIFORD DRAGON:

IN THREE VERSIONS ;

AS NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME TRICKED OUT  
IN RHYME.

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## VERSION THE FIRST.

*How the Man sought the Monster in its Den, and there Killed it.*

Who has not heard, of Herefordian birth,  
Who has not heard, as winter evenings lag on,  
That tale of awe to some—to some of mirth,  
Of Mordiford's most famous, huge, Green Dragon ?  
Who has not seen the figure on its church,  
At western end, outspread to all beholders,  
Where lean'd the beggar pilgrim on his crutch,  
And ask'd its meaning—body, head, and shoulders ?

Who has not, as with toast and cider bowl,  
Friend sits with friend in cheery chimney corner,  
Who has not heard the tale, in part or whole,  
And watch'd how e'en it charm'd the wonder-scorner ?  
Then, to this tale, as here first told in rhyme,  
All measur'd off in manner chiming truly ;  
A tale of dingy, misty, far-off time,  
And yet one vouch'd for by tradition duly.

There, in the quiet, small, old Mordiford,  
 Where Lug meets Wye, and Wye with Lug off-running,  
 Twists Lug now this, now that way, as a cord ;  
 Or, as a debtor dunn'd leads him who's dunning,—  
 There, still we see the place, and hear the tale,  
 Where Man and Monster fought for life and glory ;  
 Nor none can righteously the facts assail,  
 For even the Church itself still puts it 'fore ye.

And yet it was harsh fate to urge on him,  
 The mortal combatant, who so must venture  
 To risk his being eat up heart and limb,  
 (A cruel chance for hope therein to centre),  
 By foe dragonian, with saw-like wings  
 To take it through the air, as eagle flying,  
 The tongue keen barb'd with two tremendous stings,  
 And stretch'd out body, long as pine down lying !

Its legs well hing'd, and from its breast-bone grown,  
 Both thick and strong ; and feet that had great measure ;  
 Toes horn'd, and webb'd, as in the duck is shown ;  
 So fly it could, or run, or swim at pleasure.  
 And terrible it was in appetite ;  
 Tail terrible ; and in its jaws' wide-fanging ;  
 And terrible its breathing, and its bite ;—  
 Oh, sure to meet such thing was worse than hanging !

And yet they march him out, the criminal,  
 (For such was he who had to brave this dooming ;)   
 They march him from his dark immuring ocell,  
 To meet this dread—more awful far death-glooming.  
 " You have the choice to fight," they say, " or die ;  
 And stout we know you are, of heart undaunted ;  
 Your greater glory, then, must herein lie,  
 So kill this Scourge, and then your pardon's granted.

" Day after day some cruelty is done ;  
 Our sheep, our oxen, and our children dearest,  
 It comes and swallows all ! both skin and bone ;  
 And nothing we can try in least it fearest."  
 " I go," said he ; " so say no more, but give  
 Back to this hand my true sword in your keeping ;  
 With it I will enforce the right to live,  
 And sire and mother cause to cease their weeping."

And as he spoke they marvell'd much to hear  
 How bold his spirit rose at the occasion ;  
 His manner calm and firm, his eye severe ;  
 Nothing in aught of terror or evasion.  
 And then, the sword being brought, he straightway went,  
 With steady stride, to dare the foe so mighty ;  
 Dash'd in the den where it its slumber spent,  
 And caught it thus when 'twas not very flighty.

And far, aback, the amaz'd crowd look'd on,  
 The Mordifordians, of all various ages ;  
 Mother with daughter, father with his son ;  
 The while the battle fierce and fiercer rages.  
 His first blow on the coil'd up monster fell  
 In way its middle back almost to sunder ;  
 And as th' attacker saw it work'd so well,  
 He gather'd courage fresh, that 'twas no blunder.

And then he struck another, instantly,  
 And next another, and another faster ;  
 Nor had it power, thus hack'd about, to fly,  
 For now, indeed, the monster found its master !  
 In bubbling blood it twin'd and writh'd about ;  
 Now tried one wing, and now it tried another,  
 But still in vain—the blood more thick gush'd out,  
 Till head and tail was all one gory smother !

Sleeping he caught it—though no sleep took he,  
 But, watchful of each chance, cut on, and mangled,  
 As one who play'd such butcher part with glee,  
 As one who with his new trade was new-fangled.  
 And they who still look'd on did wonder much  
 How 'twas the dragon never took to flying,  
 For such was still his way—his whim was such,  
 His manner this of cock-a-doo-dle crying !

Surely, they thought, the man's eat up ere now ;  
 One mouthful ! and engulph'd down greedy gullet,  
 Fast as the slimy passage would allow,  
 All—head and heels, as 'twere a tiny pullet !  
 But here, in verity, they much mistook ;  
 And soon they found far different was the story,  
 For, coming forth, the monster's sting he shook,  
 Torn from its mouth, in token of his glory !

"Behold!" he cried, "all you who've eyes to see,  
 Thus have I conquer'd, by this fork'd token;  
 And ye who can't believe, come here to me,  
 And learn yourselves the truth of what I've spoken."  
 And then they ran—all Mordiford—to where  
 He call'd them, with intelligence so cheering;  
 Who truly found the slaughter'd monster there,  
 A dreadful heap of wound and blood-besmearing!

"The Dragon's kill'd!" then all broke forth in song;  
 "The Dragon's kill'd!" became their instant chorus;  
 "And this the hero whom we bear along!  
 And this its horred sting he brings before us!"  
 And thus they went up Lug, and by the Wye,  
 And o'er the hills and vales, with bosoms panting;  
 "This is the man who won the victory!  
 This is the man, let hill and vale be chanting!"

Nor did their praise and thankfulness here end;  
 Such one, they thought, must be in God's high favour;  
 'Twas only He who so could man befriend,  
 And bless with such result such bold endeavour.  
 And then the question rose, as instantly,  
 How best to give such deed commemoration?  
 Which was the worthier kind of effigy?  
 And which would be the most befitting station?

And some propos'd the highest hill about;  
 And some, still better, where the dragon's den was;  
 When now, the priest, most sage of all, no doubt,  
 Thought that Holy Church, as holy 't then was,  
 Would be, of all, the far most fitting place  
 To show such honour to their Heavenly Maker,  
 He who miraculously bestow'd such grace,  
 And made weak man so great an undertaker!

And as he spoke, all instantly agreed;  
 To him they ever yielded up their gilding;  
 To him they told their sins; and him they feed;  
 No other like the Priest on earth abiding!  
 In church erections he was architect;  
 For Priests in those days were deep skill'd in building,  
 Knew what for sacred end had best effect,  
 In paint for window, wall, or golden gilding.

But needless 'tis to say ought more of this ;  
 Suffice it, then, to close this tale so wondrous,  
 They sent for famous hand to Salamis,  
 A painter who was sure to make no blunders,  
 And him intrusted with the wish to show  
 To future ages something of this story.  
 And this he did : he took his brush, and, lo !  
 The dragon trac'd in all its living glory.

And yet, even yet, that figure still is seen,  
 Renew'd, from time to time, whenever wanting,  
 The Winged Monster, in its colour green,  
 And with destructive impulse venom-panting.  
 And all in Mordiford will show it you,  
 Whoever wanders by the Wye and Lug there ;  
 And as the child stands by, 'twill look all blue,  
 E'en but to hear of this once dreadful bugbear !

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#### VERSION THE SECOND.

*The Battle of the Barrel, when neither Man nor Dragon was the Winner.*

Two sides, they say, are always to a tale,  
 And many more than two, as oft it happens ;  
 And he who writeth careful, should retail  
 What are these sides—these extra overlappin's,  
 So that he hath good credence with the world,  
 As a most worthy, honest, story-teller,  
 Where nothing of the truth is dark up-curl'd,  
 As kitchen-maid hides lever in the cellar.

The Man and Monster contest then, again,  
 Deserves another word for this good reason ;  
 And thus this trusty verse stand free from stain,  
 And ever, like a May-flower, be in season.  
 Nor nought of interest should poet have  
 In leaning partial to one way or other ;  
 'Tis all the same to him—to daman or save,  
 And not to laud a crime, or wrong to smother.

'Twill make no difference, therefore, how some tell  
 That 'twas not so our hero kill'd the dragon ;  
 For, as they say, the verse will run as well,  
 As lightsomely as ever did fly-waggon ;  
 And as a proof, let now the reader take  
 This other version of the fam'd achievement ;  
 The Dragon at the time being " wide awake,"  
 And not e'en dreaming of its life-bereavement !

By these 'tis told, then, that it was not so,  
 The Man destroy'd the Monster, so outrageous,  
 But that (and still the place they will you show),  
 Being more cunning than he was courageous,  
 He met the issue at the water's side,  
 Where the Green Fiend would come a daily drinking,  
 Hid up in barrel, with a hole so wide  
 As just to see through, as from spy-glass blinking.

There, badger-like, up-coll'd, himself he plac'd,  
 Having both air and sight through that hole only,  
 Quiet as death, and criminally disgrac'd ;  
 And all the scene around most wild and lonely :  
 There harbour'd he, until at last he heard  
 A strange foot rushing through the yielding bushes ;  
 And still it comes—and now the barrel's stirr'd,  
 As just beside that awful hearing hushes !

And, man in barrel ! what is now your scheme ?  
 How do you hope to win your life's deliv'rance ?  
 To kill the monster now within the stream,  
 How is't you aim ? by what surprising clever sense ?  
 There swimming, plunging, drinking, as it may,  
 There, in the Lug, the haughty victor gambols ;  
 Now driving up and down in fearful play :  
 How can you get such thing to butcher's shambles ?

Questions like these 'tis natural to make :  
 And yet—behold ! even now they are resolving :  
 The Monster sports, and drinks its thirst to slake ;  
 And now, the barrel, on the wave revolving  
 A little this and that way—side-long still,  
 It needs must know what gives such novel motion ?  
 For Dragon, like to man, has prying will,  
 And would of all it sees get sagest notion.

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And so the Monster moves to learn it all—  
 What mystery, or dead or live, there's lurking;  
 How 'tis that strange thing, like a buoy'd-up ball,  
 Keeps thus for ever in such curious working?  
 It comes! and loud, and louder is the noise  
 The water makes to feel such fierce careering;  
 No puny oar the fisher there employs,  
 But 'tis the Dragon swims!—the never-fearing!

It comes! and lifting up its long, huge, snout,  
 The eye all fire, and lower jaw down dropping,  
 And tongue, with its keen barbing, far thrust out,  
 It comes! and now it makes an instant stopping;  
 Snorts, twists its tail, and flaps its up-stretch'd wings,  
 Then rears itself insulting, on the barrel,  
 Striving, as 'twere, so strong its passion wrings,  
 To find even in such object cause of quarrel.

And then—what next? the hasty querist asks;  
 Oh, patience, reader; take a little breathing;  
 The poet's are not still the easiest tasks,  
 The wreath he'd weave not still the easiest wreathing.  
 Nor is it always prudent to put forth  
 The whole of any good in hurried measure;  
 For much the sauce will give an added worth—  
 The mode by which we cook up any pleasure.

How plac'd the Dragon was we just have seen—  
 The man in barrel, and the monster o'er it,  
 Thinking, as best it could, what might it mean?  
 What egg it was? and where the bird that bore it?  
 Nor was the man quite idle all this time,  
 But at the hole kept, ever strict watch keeping:  
 I'll do the deed, he thought—I'll do it prime;  
 To murder such as you will cause no weeping!

And instant, then, the Dragon's breast close by,  
 With mighty thrust of sword, or dudgeon dagger,  
 (The weapon not being kept in memory),  
 He struck it to the heart and made it stagger,  
 The blood out-gushing, as from pump at work,  
 In boiling heat, and fizzing in the water;  
 And then he struck again, as fierce as Turk,  
 Ere yet it got off from that place of slaughter!

And when it did, the man as quick was out,  
 The staves thrust forward, and on land on-jumping,  
 Well knowing, as he felt, that foe so stout,  
 Would soon that barrel's ribs be heavy thumping.  
 And out-sprung, too, the Dragon after him,  
 Out from the Lug, where it so late had sported,  
 Taking its pastime in a frolic swim—  
 A scene to which it had so oft resorted.

And then, and there, the Man and Dragon fought  
 As best they might; the one with all man's cunning,  
 Giving no chance away, as came the thought,  
 And Dragon madden'd from its first wound-stunning.  
 Long, long they fought—how long there's none can say,  
 The monster striving still to be the winner,  
 But all in vain—the man stabb'd fast away,  
 And now all helpless dropp'd the fork'd-tongued sinner!

And yet how sad! expiring as it lay,  
 Writhing its wings and tail in dreadful caper,  
 It breath'd upon the man in desp'rate way,  
 When lifeless fell he, too, from that fell vapour!  
 Thus Man and Dragon met most dismal end,  
 The Dragon from the Man, the Man from Dragon,  
 Striving their precious laurels to defend,  
 Though neither in this case had much to brag on.

### VERSION THE THIRD.

*The Monster, said to be of amphibious nature, being found in a Difficulty, is then set on and conquered by the Mordifordians in mass.*

Another side belongs yet to this tale,  
 Of how the Dragon met its meet deserving,  
 So much of difference will still prevail  
 Where whim of man for novelty is starving;  
 And such in early times was oft'ner shewn  
 Than even as now we find it—no reporters  
 To take things up and have them paper-blown  
 The country round, to all new's house resorters.



But all was dark—strange—oddsome, long ago ;  
 Valley and mount kept changing places ever ;  
 And what are now small weeds did tree-like grow,  
 And monstrous beasts wild gambell'd in each river !  
 There was no passing safe on any path,  
 Security, no matter whither wending :  
 The very air was fill'd with things of wrath,  
 Still looking out for prey, and there descending.

The human heart was also different quite  
 To what it now is, through this fierce tuition ;  
 To *wis*—no matter how—alone was *right* ;  
 This was of all the practice and religion.  
 In every quarter native Nimrods rul'd,  
 Who fed on blood in place of water-gruel ;  
 To hunt each other e'en from childhood school'd,  
 Learning from year to year to be more cruel.

Sometimes, 'tis true, as certain wild beasts still  
 Are seen to do—in countries, desert, cheerless,  
 They'd hard together—but it was to kill  
 The better in their strength, and be more fearless.  
 As wolves in droves from far recesses start  
 And lay the sheepfold all in gory ruins,  
 So these, our fierce forefathers, had like art,  
 And mov'd in banded groups to guiltiest doings.

These ancient, venerable—these “good old times,”  
 As oft we hear them phras'd in poet's dreaming,  
 Made virtue out of what we'd now call crimes,  
 And as ev'n yet is done by splendid scheming.  
 And long things went on thus, from age to age,  
 But not as harshly so, though slow decreasing,  
 The code infuri'd softening still its rage,  
 Bit after bit, as wholly doom'd to ceasing.

Yet came these changes very—very slow,  
 So hard it is to give up former liking ;  
 The hand was cut off, or an ear must go,  
 In those we'd punish, in a manner “striking ;”  
 Or, when we'd kill outright, we'd make a fire,  
 And place the culprit there—all richly roasting ;  
 The coal still stirring up with fierce desire,  
 Resolv'd the blaze should deeper burn than toasting !

Then, too, the devil, with cloven foot, and tail,  
 Would come upon man in his vagaries often,  
 Delighting to survey our human all,  
 And, as we suffer'd, callous fall a scoffin' ;  
 And weirds and witches were in every place,  
 And warlocks, too,—the whole dark brood of evil ;  
 All demons of the curs'd, infernal, race,  
 All tools and panders to the one great devil !

And long the pious had to bear this all ;  
 And still severely suffer'd all the lowly :  
 There was no peace, as now we peace would call,  
 But every way was ill and injury solely.  
 The king, or any other chieftain great,  
 The poor man's corn or cow would take at pleasure.  
 Whate'er his power could grasp, 'twas his estate,  
 His own will still the only rightful measure.

Oh, dreadful days, these days so long ago !  
 The man a fiend, and fiends of other nature ;  
 In earth, in air, in water—all could show  
 Some cruel monstrous thing of make and feature !  
 The rivers, as already has been said,  
 Nurs'd in their slimy beds creations horrid,  
 Such as are now, alone, in sage books read,  
 As things from hell itself seduc'd or borrow'd !

And one of these, they say—part fish, part beast,  
 And part bird, also, from its power of flying,  
 Liv'd in the Lug, and there in size increas'd,  
 Till, in its greed, all human force defying,  
 It turn'd its teeth on man himself, as food  
 The better for its softness and its savour,  
 Breaking the bones, and sucking up the blood,  
 And tearing flesh from flesh without least favour.

And sometimes, when the sluices in the hills,  
 Would freer open, and the streams, on-gushing,  
 Would drive, and drive along with fiercer wills,  
 And, from the sides embanking, wild up-pushing,  
 Flow wide, and everywhere, and any-how,  
 Then would it take a larger range for plunder,  
 In quest of drown'd sheep, or drown'd cow,  
 Swimming and flying half—a thing of wonder !

And thus it was upon one happy time,—  
 Thrice happy for its fortunate befriending,  
 The harvest in, and autumn in its prime,  
 For yet September had not found its ending,—  
 Then did the hill-streams pour all hasty down  
 For two whole days and two whole nights unceasing;  
 And soon the banks of Lug were seen to drown,  
 And o'er the meadows still the flood increasing.

At Mordiford the sight was truly grand,  
 Though much they fear'd, withal, the worthy people;  
 Gate—outhouse—tree—swept off the smiling land,  
 And threat'ning, as they thought, their church's steeple!  
 And, then, of greater moment still than this,  
 There saw they, too—all widely onward dashing—  
 The Dragon Serpent! e'en they heard it hiss,  
 And splash and hiss—still hissing and still splashing!

A whole ox for a feast it had there found,  
 Short horn'd, large nostril'd, and of breast most brawny,  
 By terror quite o'ercome, and almost drown'd,  
 And now in colour more than ever tawny;  
 They saw the Dragon fierce upon it pounce,  
 Tail round its flanks, and head its thick neck under;  
 And still the ox did through the water flounce,  
 And still it bellow'd in a voice like thunder.

But all it flounc'd and bellow'd was in vain,  
 For now the Dragon snapp'd the gullet thorough;  
 And then it snapp'd and hiss'd, and snapp'd again,  
 It's pleasure greater from the other's sorrow.  
 And now its victim fell all helplessly;  
 When quick, the victor, wild, its wide mouth widenin',  
 Gulph'd down both blood and flesh in large degree,  
 And rav'nous manner there was no confidin' in!

And thus it feasted off its bulky prey,  
 Laid, as it were, half in and out the water;  
 For by this time the current slack'd its sway,  
 And so the more expos'd that scene of slaughter.  
 And never once, for hours—long hours—it left  
 That bleeding carcase for a moment single;  
 Devouring—still devouring! then it slept  
 Just as it was, all in that blood-commingle!

And while it slept, the waters back'd apace ;  
 And those, the watchers, ventur'd near and nearer ;  
 Now is the time, some said, the Fiend to face ;  
 We'll kill him now, or wrong may come severer.  
 And all applauded, as the boldest spake,  
 And arm'd themselves with every sort of arming,  
 Scythes, axes, pitchforks, iron-toothéd rake,—  
 With these they went, still thick and thicker swarming.

But silent were they—silent tongue and foot ;  
 All silent came they, fearful of disaster ;  
 For if the Dragon waken'd, who could do't ?  
 Who'd venture there the ugly brute to master ?  
 And thus, all prudently, they round it drew,  
 And then, at once, as one gave chief direction,  
 Pitchfork, and axe, and scythe, they plung'd into  
 Its scaly hide, each section wide dissecting.

And there they held him fast—all bravely there—  
 These strong-arm'd men, and vengeful in their labour,  
 They held him writhing in his gory lair,  
 Encourag'd each in each's brave behaviour ;  
 They held—and still held on, as sailors hold,  
 In time of storm, when at the windlass working,  
 Their hope all up, and hope still getting bold,  
 As faster ran the blood at each uncorking !

But needless 'tis to pen another rhyme,  
 To carry on this tale the least bit further :  
 They kill'd the Dragon, as it were no crime ;  
 They murder'd it—nor once e'en thought it murder !  
 And all the country wide, for miles about,  
 They came to see, as fast as foot could hurry,  
 And still in joy gave forth applausive shout ;  
 And then they left the Fiend the wolves to worry !

Such, therefore, as these verses have skipp'd on,  
 Is all that's left now of these Dragon Stories ;  
 Yet still, 'tis much to know that man he won—  
 Whiche'er the right one is—the battle's glories.  
 The Church it vouch'd, as hath been said before,  
 That such a Dragon liv'd, and had it painted  
 All large as life, and green as garden door ;  
 And, haply, he who killed—it had him sainted !

## ADDENDUM.

## THE DRAGON, A SYMBOL OF PAGANISM.

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IN A LETTER FROM SIR SAMUEL RUSH MEYRICK, K.H., &C.

Having learned that it was the opinion of Sir Samuel Rush Meyrick, that the origin of the story of the *Mordiford Dragon*, might be fairly assigned (notwithstanding all that has been said in the foregoing "History" and verses,) to the period of the struggles between Paganism and Christianity, I took the liberty of writing to him on the subject, and had, by return of post, (I pray the reader will mark this kind and gentlemanly attention), the gratification of receiving the following answer. During the short time that has transpired since the receipt of this answer and sending of the present *Addendum* to the printer, I have been endeavouring to get a look at those books to which Sir Samuel refers, but, unfortunately, without effect, as none of the libraries in Hereford possess either of them. In this difficulty, therefore, (and I feel I shall obtain his pardon for so doing,) I have ventured to place his own letter before the reader, being unwilling that such curious and valuable information as it contains, should not be the means of making known to others, some of the sources of a much more extended and deeper scope of inquiry than I, myself, had attempted in connection with the subject of the foregoing pages. I may here, too, state, that the Very Reverend the Dean of Hereford, has also made known to me another book of the same bearing—the Rev. Mr. Dean's work on the *Serpent Worship of the Ancients*.—The letter of Sir Samuel's, with the exception of the opening paragraph, is worded thus:—

"Goodrich Court, 19th Dec., 1847.

"To shew that the Dragon (Draco of the Romans) or Serpent (the Ophis of the Greeks, Cneph of the Egyptians, the Dreig of the ancient Britons, the Worm or Orm of the Anglo-Saxons, and so on of all other ancient nations,) were names given to the Pagan Deity after the adoption of the Sabæan idolatry, would require, together with the inferences to be drawn from thence, a volume instead of a quire of note paper ; but I would refer you to the 1st vol. of Bryant's *Analysis of Mythology*, p. 478 to 490 ; the English translation of Mallett's *Introduction to the History of Denmark* ; and Davies's *Mythology of the Druids*. Taking this, however, for granted, it will be easily conceived that all stories of the conquest and subjection of the Dragon refer to the destruction of Paganism by the introduction of Christianity. The legend of St. George of Cappadocia is acknowledged to be this fact under an allegory, and the admission of the captured dragon into a Christian church, such as at Mordiford, was intended to shew what a dreadful monster, to whom human victims were sacrificed, was destroyed by the mild religion we now profess. So of all other such stories. Dr. Plott, in his *History of Oxfordshire*, p. 349, mentions a custom at Burford, in that county, of making a dragon every year, and carrying it up and down the town in great jollity, on Midsummer's eve. This was one of the Druidic festivals. Mabinogion signifies ' Juvenile Instructions,' and were at first composed for the young aspirants to Druidism. They are all allegories, and the oldest are those which refer to the introduction of the Sabæan idolatry or worship of the Sun and Moon, and the struggles made by the priesthood of the previous more simple worship with the innovators. The next refers to the contests of the professors of this

mixed religion with those who preached Christianity, and which were not ended before the 7th or 8th century. To these succeeded romances bearing the same title, which were founded on the old mythology, some of which, written in the time of Edward II. and one perhaps earlier, have been printed, with translations, at the expense of Lady Charlotte Guest, from the Red Book of Yr Gêst or Hargest, in Herefordshire. Others of the first and second kind have been published in the Cambrian Register and other periodicals relating to Wales, but I cannot at this moment recollect where I have met with one which bears a strong resemblance to the account of the Dragon of Mordiford, which has been with such tact and discrimination composed by yourself.

"I shall at all times be happy to show you any of the books in this library, and among other things ivory carvings illustrative of legendary lore, which shew the artistic skill of the time of Edward II. A 'dragon' had been adopted by the ancient Britons, and applied to their divinity; it came to signify 'a leader;' Pendragon, therefore, implied 'Chief leader;' and Uthyr Pendragon, 'Illustrious chief leader.\*"

"Yours very truly,

"SAMUEL R. MEYRICK.

"To Mr. J. Dacres Devlin."

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\*In a scrap from the pen of Mr. Theophilus Jones, the author of the History of Brecknockshire, as communicated to me by Mr. Bird, he writes,— "Dragon Wallia, a Leader: Pendragon, a Leader—a Generalissimo:" while in the *Pictorial History of England* it is said, that Cadwallader, who is called the last of the British kings, bore on his ensign a dragon, which Henry VII. had sculptured in his chapel at Westminster, in illustration of his boasted Tudor descent. (Vol. ii. p. 228.)—The reader who is curious in such a subject, may see the whole tracing of this lineage at the end of Wynne's History of Wales, 1702, where it is said to have been executed "at the King's Majesty's costs and charges."

Though unable to consult either of those authorities, to which I was referred, I was not without finding something to the purpose in other quarters ; and so, in confirmation of the opinion of Sir S. R. Meyrick, as above stated, and also as a specimen of the curious metamorphosis which some of these ancient allegories underwent, I shall here add an extract from a religious exhortation, dating as early as the fifteenth century. The original makes part of the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum, and has been printed in the second volume of the "Pictorial History of England." (p. 220.) In this extract it will be found, that the serpent or dragon, worm or lindenworm, is here, likewise, called the adder, or "edder," as the word is written,—but an adder, as may be imagined, of no insignificant size,—and also that the event related is substantially the same as that already given at page 21, in the note from the Mabinogion.

"Ther was sumtyme a Knyght cam from ferr cuntries wolde seke Aventures. So it fortunèd to a forrest where he herd a grete noyse of a beste crying. So this Knyght drough nygh, and ther he sawe how an Edder had acumbred and all to clypped and venemyd hym and bounde the lyon to a tree while he lay and slept. Whan the lyon waked of his slepe, and perceyved himselfe bounde, and myght not helpe hym selfe, he made an horrible cry. Than the Knyght had compassion on the lyon and sawe that the Kyng of bestes was in distresse, he drough oute his swerde and slough the edder, and loweseyd the lyon. And whan the lyon founde hym selfe unbounde he fell down to the Knyghts fete, and ever after he sarved the Knyght, and every nyght lay at his beddis fete ; in tornaments and bataylls ever helpid the Knyght ; in so moch that all men spake of the Knyght and the lyon. By this Knyght is



undirstande Criste Jhesu, second person in Trynnyte, that cam from ferr cuntry, that is to say from heven into the vale of this wreechid worlde, to unbynde mankynde that was bounde with the olde adder the devell that had bounde mankynde to the tree of Inobedyence. And so Criste lowesyd mankynde out of the bonde of the devill with the swerde of his precious passion, and made hym fre. Wherefore must every man and woman shewe kyndenes to that gode lorde, as the lyon dyd unto the Knyght, to be obesaunte to hym and thanke hym of his godenes and of hys unbyndinge from the bondes of the devell, and pursen and folow the teching of God."

A singular relation, and told with much dramatic skill, of the same general affinity in its symbolical drift and issue, is contained in the ancient Danish Saga of King Olaf Haraldson the Saint. Olaf is said to have reigned from the year 1013 to 1030 ; and being, as his name would indicate, sincerely attached to the Christian faith, he made it his constant and earnest endeavour to bring the whole of his subjects over to his own religion,—an endeavour which met with much opposition, as the single instance about to be detailed will certify.

The King having formed a truce with one of the most potent and stubborn of his subjects—one who had actually risen in rebellion against him, backed by a large party of adherents—with a view of discovering, if possible, which was the true and pure religion by other means than those of strife, a Thing, parliament or assembly, of all concerned was called ; an immense representation of Thor, the God of the northern Pagans, put in requisition for the discomfiture of the King, when thus the conclusion of the affair is related:—

"There was a strong man with King Olaf called Kolbein Sterki (the Strong), who came from a family in the Florde

district. Usually he was so equipt that he was girt with a sword, and besides carried a great stake, otherwise called a club, in his hands. The King told Kolbein to stand nearest to him in the morning ; and gave orders to his people to go down in the night to where the ships of the bonders lay and bore holes in them, and to let loose their horses on the farms where they were : all which was done. Now the King was in prayer all the night, beseeching God of his goodness and mercy to release him from evil. When mass was ended, and morning was grey, the King went to the Thing . When he came there some bonders had already arrived, and they saw a great crowd coming along, and bearing among them a huge man's image glancing with gold and silver. When the bonders at the Thing saw it, they started up, and bowed themselves down before the ugly idol. Thereupon it was set upon the Thing-field ; and on the side of it sat the bonders, and on the other the King and his people.

"Then Dale Gunbrand stood up, and said, ' Where now, King, is thy God ? I think he will now carry his head lower ; and neither thou, nor the man with the horn [the crozier] whom ye call bishop, and sits beside thee, are so bold to-day, as on former days ; for now our god, who rules over all, is come, and looks on you with an angry eye : and now I see well enough that ye are terrified, and scarcely dare raise your eyes. Throw away now all your opposition, and believe in the god who has all your fate in his hands.'

"The King now whispers to Kolbein Sterki, without the bonders perceiving it, ' If it comes so in the course of my speech that the bonders look another way than towards their idol, strike him as hard as thou canst with thy club.'

"The King then stood up and spoke. ' Much hast thou

talked to us this morning, and greatly hast thou wondered that thou canst not see our God ; but we expect that he will soon come to us. Thou wouldst frighten us with thy God, who is both blind and deaf, and can neither save himself nor others, and cannot even move about without being carried ; but now I expect it will be but a short time before he meets his fate : for turn your eyes towards the east,—and behold our God advancing in great light.\*

“The sun was rising, and all turned to look. At that moment Kolbein gave their god a stroke, so that their idol burst asunder ; and there ran out of it mice as big almost as cats, and *reptiles* and *adders*. The bonders were so terrified that some fled to their ships ; but when they sprung out upon them they filled with water, and could not get away. Others ran to their horses, but could not find them. The King then ordered the bonders to be called together, saying he wanted to speak with them ; on which the bonders came back, and the Thing was again seated.

The King rose up and said, ‘I do not understand what your noise and running mean. Ye see yourselves what your god can do,—the idol ye adorned with gold and silver, and brought meat and provisions to. Ye see now that the *protecting powers who used it were mice, and adders, reptiles, and paddocks ; and they do ill who trust to such, and will not abandon this folly*. Take now your gold and ornaments that are lying strewed about on the grass, and give them to your wives and daughters ; but never hang them hereafter upon stock or stone. Here are now two conditions between us to choose upon,—either accept Christianity, or fight this very day ; and the victory be to them to whom the God we worship gives it.’\*

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\* We read in the volume from which this extract is taken, that the same King on going into battle on one occasion, “ had a white banner, on which was a *Serpent* figured.” (p. 44.)

"Then Dale Gunbrand stood up and said, 'We have sustained great damage upon our god ; but since he will not help us, we will believe in the God that thou believest in.'

"Then all received Christianity. The bishop baptized Gunbrand and his son. King Olaf and Bishop Sigurd left behind them teachers, and they who met as enemies parted as friends ; and *Gunbrand built a Church in the valley.*' (*Chronicle of the Kings of Norway*, vol. i. pp. 159-60.)

Here, then, we have as before, exactly the like mode of illustration, where amongst the other foul creatures which found their nurture, and a home, in the bowels of the huge idol Thor ; "reptiles, adders, and paddocks" are mentioned—the Satanic *adder* which tempted Eve in Paradise, as the word is translated in the earliest English versions of the Bible, being always uppermost in the thought of the early Christian teacher or historian. Dale Gunbrand, too, in grateful acknowledgment of his error, builds a church, wherein he may offer up his new worship ; while in, or on, which church, he possibly might have represented—as at Mordiford—the very reptile figure,—let be called adder, serpent, or dragon,—whose hollow and vicious pretences the better and mightier God had detected and destroyed.

The same work,—one so highly-suggestive in the peculiarity of the facts it narrates, and particularly as regards the British reader, from the many abiding impressions which the Danish occupation of these islands must have left on the people at large and their customs—shows, also, in many other places the early and extensive popularity of these most singular Dragon or Serpent myths and their influences, and as a further extract or two will clearly enough explain :—

"Now, when they came to Raud's house, his great

ship, the *Dragon*, was afloat close to the land. King Olaf went up to the house immediately with his people; made an attack on the loft in which Raud was sleeping, and broke it open. . . . King Olaf took here much gold and silver, and other property of weapons, and many sorts of precious effects; and all the men who were with Raud he either baptized, or if they refused, had them killed or tortured. Then the King took the *Dragon-ship* which Raud had owned, and steered it himself; for it was a much larger and handsomer vessel than the Crane. In front it had a *Dragon's head*, and aft a crook which turned up, and ended with the *figure of the Dragon's tail*. This ship the King called the *Serpent*. When the sails were hoisted they represented, as it were, the *Dragon's wings*; and the ship was the handsomest in all Norway." (Vol. i. p.p. 448-9.) And thus, in another place (p. 457 of the same volume):—"The ship was a *Dragon*, built after the one the King had captured in Halogaland; but this ship was far larger, and more carefully put together in all her parts. The King called this ship *Serpent the Long*, and the other *Serpent the Short*. The long *Serpent* had thirty-four benches for rowers. The head and arched tail were both gilt, and the bulwarks were as high as in sea-going ships."

Were it possible, then, that one of these *wooden Serpents* had ever made its way to Mordiford; and thus, through some peculiar cause or other, to have indelibly connected its name with the humble inhabitants of that locality; and thence, in time, to have become the obscure tradition which it is now found to be? Many quite as unlikely things as this have happened.

## MORE ABOUT THE DRAGON.

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FROM MR. DUNCOMB'S MANUSCRIPTS.

It is well known to those who are acquainted with the Rev. J. Duncomb's *History of the City and County of Hereford*, that the work he contemplated under this name was never finished,—the first volume, along with some general introductory matter, being on the City alone, and the second, printed eight years after, comprising the Hundreds of Broxash and Ewias Lacy; the Hundred of Greytree, including the parish of Mordiford, and the eight other hundreds which the county contains, being left for publication in another or other volumes.

The notice which already has been given from the first volume of Mr. Duncomb's labours, where he makes mention of the Mordiford Legend, being merely incidental, as he might make it illustrative of the subject that was immediately under his consideration, it ought not, therefore, to be expected that such was all he had to say on the matter. This supposition must suggest itself to the generality of minds; and, hence, on lately calling upon Mr. Bird, I had the satisfaction of being allowed to copy from Mr. Duncomb's unpublished materials (the greater part, if not the whole, of which are in the possession of Mr. Bird,) the following further illustrations concerning the Dragon, which I found among other rough draughts of his papers in connection with Mordiford. What is said of the ancient British chieftain Mordred, in regard to the place taking its name from him, throws a fresh light on the etymology of the

word ; though whether this light be such a one as is spoken of by the poet Moore, as not being "from heaven," and so can only lead astray, must remain matter for the consideration of those who are much better qualified than myself to offer an opinion, one way or other. All that from first to last was proposed by me to do, was to give the "whole History ;" and now, in adding, this "More about the Dragon," I am still but fulfilling my one original intention. Mr. Duncomb's further statement is as follows:—

"Mr. Blount, of Orleton, whose valuable collections as an antiquary were made soon after the year 1670, observed that 'a serpent was then pictured on the wall of the church.' This representation having, however, undergone such alterations as the fancy of the successive painters have suggested on its various renewals. At the last representation [referring, probably, as Mr. Bird thinks, to the year 1800,] it, perhaps, approached nearest to the form of a lizard : the body being covered with scales of green and gold. It had four legs, with webbed feet, two griffin-like wings, and a long and formidable tail. The size was gigantic ; or, perhaps, it is more correct to state, that it seemed to be limited only by the dimensions of the wall on which it was displayed : this wall fronts the west, and the drawing was given on the outside, facing the bridge.

"The common account of the dragon is, that a dangerous animal formerly infested the woody hills and rocky declivities in the vicinity, and that it much resembled the famous Dragon of Wharncoliff, (vulgarly Wantley,) near Sheffield, in Yorkshire,

'For houses and churches  
Were unto him geese and turkies.'"

He then goes on to state some parts of the tradition about the Dragon's death, &c. ; after which he says—

"Such is the popular story of the Dragon of Mordiford, which like many others of a similar description, although

interspersed with fable, may have some foundation in fact; for this it is now proposed to inquire.

"The Dragon is well known to have been a symbol amongst the ancient Britons and many other nations of antiquity. Polydore Virgil mentions in his history, that the far-famous Prince Arthur had a nephew whose name was Mordred, and that he was slain in a popular commotion. Mordred was a name of consequence amongst the Welsh at an early period; and a dragon was the usual emblem borne on the banners of their chieftains. A similar monster is reported by Holinshed to have existed in the time of Athelstan.

"Comparing these several accounts with the tradition at Mordiford, it is with deference suggested, that during the frequent wars which took place on the frontiers between Wales and England, a party of ancient Britons, with Mordred as their chieftain, occupied the woods in this vicinity, and for a time subjected the county to heavy exactions; that in the course of his operations, the chieftain had frequent occasion to *ford* the river Lug, and thus gave the name of *Mordiford* to the spot; that after a period, his party were overpowered, and his banner bearing the emblem or insignia of the Dragon, was deposited in the church, according to ancient custom, and the practice of the Jews, who suspended in the Temple at Jerusalem, the trophies taken from their enemies, and as at the present day is in our cathedrals. One other conjecture remains; namely, that the original banner at length decaying, the memory of that eve was further preserved by painting the supposed figure of the Dragon on the wall of the church, as already noticed.

"But if the probability of this account should be deemed not sufficiently established, or even supported by the evidence which has been adduced, the reader will perhaps be better pleased with a more simple and very different suggestion.



"The religious of the houses of St. Guthlac, in Hereford,\* were formerly patrons of the church of Mordiford; they bore in the fourteenth century this coat: *gules*, a Wyvern passant, wings displayed, and tail rowed *or*. These arms were entered in the heraldic visitation of this county; and it must not be concealed that the figure of the Wyvern, bears no very distant resemblance even to the present Dragon on Mordiford church: two legs only are given to the Wyvern, and in this consisted the greatest dissimilarity between them. Possibly the supposed Dragon may have been an allusion to no other circumstance but to the arms of its former patrons."

A kindly hand, writing from London, under the signature of "Aquablanca," says, in regard to an apparent censure, contained in some previous remarks on the neglect which has been shown to the story of the Mordiford Dragon by Mr. Duncomb and other authors—

"In referring to the chief historian of the county—Mr. Duncomb, I presume—you state correctly that we may turn over his two volumes, leaf by leaf, without obtaining any information; and that it is almost a labour lost in any other direction. Unfortunately for the county, and the

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\* "In the suburb beyond Bye-street-gate was an opulent priory, dedicated to St. Guthlac, of Croyland, in Lincolnshire. Dr. Stukely observed that the situation of this priory, in a marshy place, best suited its patron. In his youth it is stated that he distinguished himself in the profession of arms; but at the age of twenty-five he engaged in the life of a hermit with great austerity; and many miraculous achievements are recorded of him. According to these accounts, he particularly signalized himself in liberating the island of Croyland from some demons which infested it." (*Duncomb's Hist. vol. i. p. 418.*) Were these demons of the Dragon, Serpent, or Wyvern species? Perhaps of all three; and thus St. Guthlac and the Mordiford Garstone made a like glorious reputation in their destruction! The Rev. Mr. Bird, in addition to his other favours, has also sent me the following copy of a memorandum by Mr. Theophilus Jones:—"The Dragon of Mordiford: arms of the Priory of .....rd, to which he belonged." The broken word here seen, was, no doubt, originally that of Hereford.

country too, Mr. Duncomb did not live to complete his work, otherwise his indefatigable research would, I think, have thrown some light on this curious tradition."

The regret, then, as here expressed, will, I hope, through the present addition to these pages, be no longer felt, either by "Aquablanca" himself, or by any other reader who may take an interest in Hereford History, seeing that those further particulars which Mr. Duncomb had intended to have made public on the subject are now put in possession of the reader in all their original integrity.

The conjecture of Mr. Duncomb that the dragon painting on the church at Mordiford might be no more than the Wyvern of Guthlac, is of a somewhat interesting character; and especially so, if we take into consideration the fact that Mr. Bird has had placed in the upper compartments of the parlour windows of the Rectory at Mordiford, among other pieces of ancient stained glass, preserved from some ruins in the county, a representation, in one case, of the Guthlac Wyvern, and, in another, of a sort of Dragon. The position of both these figures is that which in Heraldry is called *erect*, and the colour *sable* or dark. The Wyvern has wings, with the bases of great depth, and the ends long and pointed. The legs, four in number,\* are also long, and the toes clawed. The tail twists in a doubled form over

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\* On making inquiry of Sir S. R. Meyrick, (at the risk, perhaps, of causing him to suppose that I think he knows, or ought to know, everything) of the *proper* number of a Dragon's legs, he writes to me thus, in answer:—

"I do not profess to be deeply read in Dracontian lore. Dragons are sometimes represented with two, and at others with four, legs. Sleipner, the steed of Odin, had eight. This was in allusion to the *Arle* and *Ogdoad*, or eight persons it contained, for Mythology is not very accurate in its arithmetical, so that eight are given besides Odin, who was the deified patriarch. These kinds of paradoxes are continually occurring, in the same manner as the same person being sometimes the son, at others, the father; or if a female, at one time the daughter, at another the mother, but altogether showing a disjointed derivation from the Noachic deluge."

Arle

the back, and the head has a sort of dog-like cast, with the addition of two uprising appendages starting from the skull. The legs of the Dragon (if they may be so called) are likewise long, and quadruple, being altogether in character with those of the Wyvern ; while it has the like bestial tail, though not depicted with the same curl. Here, however, the resemblance closes, as the monster under notice cannot in any way be denominated a "flying Dragon," it being wholly without wings. The head is remarkable from being graced with the regal crown or coronet ; and thus, as Mr. Bird thinks, betokening some affinity either with King Pendragon, the father of Arthur, or Mordred, the nephew of Arthur, as mentioned by Polydore Virgil.

These various suppositions are, therefore, very curious, and must, along with the other matter contained in the present account, tend, at least, to show what a very ambiguous thing History is, when we attempt to carry it to its farthest limits. At one time we are merely told of a strange something which is called a "Serpent," then of a "Dragon," next of a sort of amphibious monster, part fish and part reptile ; then how that all these tales are no more than an allegory of the struggles between the Sabæan and Christian religions ; again, of the Wyvern and the Dragon being synonymous, and so on until there would seem to be no end to discovery and conjecture on this very fruitful subject.

January 24, 1847.

## THE PRIEST, LADY, AND BAILIFF.

A TALE OF HEREFORD AT THE TIME OF THE CONQUEST.

The story, if story it can be called, of the accompanying verses, has been worked out from the information contained in the following passage from Mr. Richard Johnson's very interesting *Lecture on the Ancient Customs of Hereford*, as delivered and printed in 1845.

"John Le Gaunter, or John of Gaunt, when Bailiff of Hereford, in the reign of Edward the First, furnished the men of Cardiff with the customs of the city. He mentions the following punishment for the offence of striking the Bailiff:—It appears that before the conquest, the party offending suffered the loss of the member inflicting the blow; this custom was discontinued in the time of William the Conqueror, and the reason given was, that 'a certain priest who was with the King, which was of great estate, came to the city in the name of Nuncio, or messenger, and evil behaved himself, for that he would have taken the daughter of a certain citizen of ours *vi et armis*, [by force], and a hue and cry being raised, the Bailiff came in with the power [the armed authorities] of the city, and he (the Nuncio), stroke the Bailiffe on the head with the sword, and flying away was taken and held in prison, for whom the said William sent a letter, praying that that imprisonment and custome during his time and especially that time, might be remitted, and it was granted of the citizens.'"

Oh! evil was the Conquest day,  
And bitter still the victor's sway!  
In early times, where still the Wye  
The forder's foot may safely try,  
When, far above, the stream supplies  
The river starves to smallest size;\*

\* The fine, dry season, now passing away, has afforded good proof of the river being not only easily fordable in the vicinity of the town bridge, but, in various other places; though, perhaps, more particularly in this situation. A "kilted knee" might, on almost any day of our late summer, have safely passed from bank to bank; and, no doubt but such from the remotest periods has been the case; and hence one of the conjectural derivations of the name of Hereford:—"The present name, which is of Saxon origin, is reported to have been derived from a *ford* in its neighbourhood, where the two contending nations, the Saxons and the Welsh were accustomed to pass the river Wye. It is added, by way of clearing up the etymology of the place, that a Saxon general, being hard pressed by the Britons, into whose dominions he had ventured rather too far, was obliged to retreat with such precipitation, as to mistake the usual passage of the river; but after he had pursued its course for a considerable space, and was in the utmost danger of having his troops entirely cut off, he

There eager men, of unknown name,  
 Kept gath'ring for some mutual aim,  
 For strength—in any case of need ;  
 For love—as grew the heart-fed seed ;  
 Th' enlinking lure so various felt,—  
 In strife—to dare ; in joy—to melt ;—  
 The while meek housen fast upgrew\*  
 In thick'ning clusters on the view,  
 Spreading, the watered hill-side, down,†  
 Until the whole became a town ;  
 With some few statelier domes between,  
 As if to dignify the scene !  
 But chiefly it—the sacred pile,  
 The murdered monarch claimed, erewhile ;  
 And where our eyes may still pleased fall  
 Upon such famed Cathedral ! ‡  
 —In those old times,—eight hundred years  
 Ago, as by the page appears—  
 Of faithful chronicler, or bard, §  
 Then England had her trials hard ;

espied the turrets of the city, and cried out to his disheartened followers, "*Here-ford* ;" upon which they resumed courage, and passed the river without much loss from the enemy."—*Price's Historical Account of the City of Hereford*, 1796, p. 12.

\* *Housen*, the yet commonly applied plural of house, by the rural population in, perhaps, all the English counties—a true Saxonism, healthy in shape, and most roundly sounding on the ear.

† The fine stream called the Town Brook—so clear, and ever active, running by the site of the ancient Kenchester, and discharging itself into the Wye, from the swan-graced pool which skirts the off-side of the Castle walks, must have made a most pleasing object in its original features, descending from the higher grounds on which the principal part of Hereford now stands, and there continually smiling in the full gaze of every home-sojourner.

‡ "The original Cathedral of Hereford must doubtless have been as ancient as the See ; but the account of its existence in the reign of Offa, the powerful King of Mercia, is the first that is recorded ; it was then dedicated to St. Mary, and, according to Polydore Virgil, was magnificent. The distinction which the Church had already attained, was by this period much increased by the removal to it of the body of King Ethelbert ; the concourse of pilgrims which visited the magnificent tomb that had been built by Offa, to the memory of the murdered King, added much to its celebrity ; and, in a succeeding age, in consequence of the miracles which were said to have been performed at the place, built a new church of stone, and, in honour of the deceased saint, dedicated it to Saint Ethelbert."—*Rees's Guide to Hereford*, ed. 1808, p. 80.

§ "It is hardly too much," writes the French historian, Thierry, in that most worthily executed English history of his—*The Conquest of England by the Normans*—"it is hardly too much to say, that the ancient British *fed* on poetry ; for in their political axioms which have been handed down to us, the bard ; at once poet and musician, is placed beside the labourer and the artizan, as one of the three pillars of social life." Vol. 1, p. 95.—Might he not have added historian or chronicler, as well ; and as the extracts given in his own work so abundantly prove. Nor yet did the profession of the bard wholly die out during the ascendancy of

When William, of the weighty hand,  
 Reigned dominant o'er all the land ;  
 And Norman hosts, with Norman king,  
 Continual wrong to all did bring—  
 To knight, to yeoman, and the poor  
 Out-dweller on the sheep-tracked moor ;  
 To merchant, and the artizan,—  
 To every grade of social man.

For evil was the Conquest day,  
 And bitter still the victor's sway ! \*

In every scene is strife and sighs ;  
 Gore mangled frames, and weeping eyes ;  
 The warder's horn, from castle far,  
 Wild sounding for the clash of war ;  
 The foe still fierce, and misery all,  
 With Ruin echoing Ruin's call !  
 Through every nook the fury spreads,  
 On everything the havoc speds ;  
 On loop-holed tower, and rampart strong ;  
 On all that to the fields belong ;  
 On sturdy arm, that vengefully  
 Would still the bloody struggle try ;  
 On guileless infant in its play ;  
 —It sweeps alike the whole away !  
 Th' opposing, or what may oppose ;  
 So masterful these stranger foes.

For evil was the Conquest day ;  
 And bitter still the victor's sway !

And now, in proof, oh ! list that bell !  
 Not merry with its ding-dong-dell,  
 But wild and loud, and rapid still,  
 As worked by some infuriate will !

---

the Saxons ; for even then it became, in a degree, national under that national subjection ; and was now heard to detail the wrongs done by the Normans, as before had been detailed those committed by the more ancient race of conquerors.

\* Thierry, basing his statements, among others, on the authority of Ordericus Vitalis and William of Walsesbury, two of our early historians or chroniclers, writes thus of the condition of the English immediately after the Conquest :—" Each man had an ample portion of grief and misery : that of the men was indigence and servitude ; that of the women insults and violence more cruel beside. Such as were not taken *par marriage*, were taken *par amours*, as the conquerors expressed it, and were the sport of the foreign soldiers, the lowest and meanest of whom was lord and master in the house of the conquered. ' Ignoble squires, impure vagabonds,' says contemporary writers, ' disposed at their pleasure of young women of the best families ; leaving them to weep and wish for death. Frantic wretches ! they wondered at their own acts ; and went mad with pride and astonishment at finding themselves so powerful, and having servants with greater wealth than their fathers had ever possessed. Whatever they had the will, they believed they had the right to do ; they shed blood in wantonness ; they snatched the last morsel of bread from the mouths of the unfortunate ; they seized everything—money, goods, and land.' "—Vol. 1, p. 325.

And all who listen arm apace ;  
 Then run as if in strife-ful race.  
 To where the ermined magnates all  
 Sit sober in their ancient hall,  
 And wait to know what now may be  
 The close of this bad augury ! \*  
 —To maiden meek deep ill is done ;  
 The injurer some priestly one  
 Of high estate, and high esteem  
 By him who ruled o'er all supreme,  
 The blooded Bastard ! he who came  
 To blight and blur the Saxon fame.  
 Yet cannot Saxon blood keep still  
 To look upon such wanton ill ;  
 And so from one to all the cry  
 Is—up ! and on the enemy !  
     For evil was the Conquest day,  
     And bitter still the victor's sway !

Then fast and fierce still on they move,  
 The father, in his father's love ;  
 The brother, with a brother's—all  
 Resolved to clutch the priestly pall,  
 And tear it from the recreant  
 Who thus hath garbed him as a Saint !  
 And there, as chief above the rest,  
 The Mayor or Bailiff stood confess'd, †  
 Bearing his office ensign proud.  
 And calming down the rampant crowd ;  
 Who all his presence soon confess'd,  
 While he the vile one thus address'd :—  
 “ Ho ! ho ! Sir Priest, this will not do ;  
 Our daughters must not yield to you !  
 Such hateful wrong we may not brook  
 From one who bears the SHEPHERD's crook !  
 Most foul it is, in thought and deed ;  
 Our city must from such be freed ;  
 We cannot let these crimes go free,  
 So—on—a captive now with me.”

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\* “ Amongst these customs, a very important one was that of keeping bells to be rung only for particular purposes, and on particular occasions. There was a common bell for preventing vagrants and night-walkers remaining within the city beyond a certain hour. There was also another bell, concerning which, as more important, I shall quote the words of the return to the King's [Henry 2nd] writ—‘ One bell we use to have in a public place when our Chief Bailiff may come, as well by day as by night, to give warning to all men living within the city and suburbs ; and we do not say that it ought to be rung unless it be for some terrible fire burning any row of houses within the said city, or for any common contention whereby the city might be terribly moved, or for any enemies drawing near the city, or if the city shall be besieged, or any sedition between any shall be.’ And all persons were to come at the ringing of this bell, armed with such weapons as fitted their degree.”—*Johnson's Lecture*, p. 2.

† Duncombe states that the title of Mayor was made to supersede, in Hereford, the more ancient one of Bailiff, in 1383, when Richard II. was on the throne.

He said ; and quick the injurer,  
 Incensed that such a mut'nous stir  
 These *vassals* of his King should make,  
 Deigned not the least excuse to spake,  
 But, most outrageously, with stroke  
 Of sword, was all the word he spoke !  
 Full, heavy, falling on the head  
 Of Bailiff, till the blood outsped !

For evil was the Conquest day,  
 And bitter still the victor's sway !

Still worse, and worse !—This double wrong  
 The passions fiercer forced along,  
 And instant had the caitiff priest  
 Been torn, as for a vulture feast,  
 Each part asunder, limb by limb,  
 But William, in his shadow dim !  
 Frowned terribly on all that crowd,  
 And thus to gentler bearing bowed.

For evil was the Conquest day,  
 And bitter still the victor's sway !

And yet not wholly vain, did they,  
 Who mingled there go home, that day ;  
 The priest to gaol, withal, was led,  
 To find a stone-floor for his bed ;  
 And if he slept, to image there  
 The wrong he offered to the fair ;  
 And to the potent Bailiff, who  
 Came in his right, *the right to do !*  
 But still that priest was soon set free ;  
 The Conqueror had clemency  
 For Norman nuncio, or lord,  
 And broke his fetters with a word !  
 And that his crime-stained hand should still  
 Be left to do its owner's will ;  
 For what were Saxon laws to one  
 Who came to trample all law on ?  
 —He "prayed," the Record says. Oh, pride !  
 He *ordered*, and the wronged complied.  
 And who can censure, even so,  
 For hiding thus such cause of woe ;  
 As oft' to screen our blank estate,  
 We fill with flowers the gaping grate ;  
 Or injured lover says sweet things,  
 Though all within be scorpion stings ;  
 And so, in shame, the Record lies  
 And flares a falsehood on our eyes.

For evil was the Conquest day,  
 And bitter still the victor's sway ! \*

Hereford, Aug. 17, 1847.

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\* A relation of considerable local interest, but much too long to be given here, and which, as far as I remember, neither Price, Rees, Wright, nor Duncombe, have noticed, may be found in *Theirry*, vol. 1, p. 343, showing how an attempt was made to subject Hereford and its neighbourhood to the authority of William, at a very early period after his invasion, but which was most resolutely and patriotically met and put down under the leadership of the young Edric, son of the Saxon king, Alfrie.



## THE STORY OF AUNT BESS.

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[ This aged and most worthy poor woman, Elizabeth Coultas, a native of Yorkshire, has long been a resident of Hereford, in consequence of the marriage of a beloved niece into a family belonging to the neighbourhood. With this niece, Mrs. Addis, who is now a widow, she lives in Nicholas' Passage, Bridge-street; where she is familiarly called by all the household, as also by the neighbours, by the genial appellation of "Aunt Bess;" and is, besides, an object of considerable interest to such few among the wealthier classes as have been made acquainted with her extreme age and altogether very interesting character. The days of Aunt Bess, from her earliest girlhood, until the time she came to Herefordshire—about twenty years since—have been passed in service; at first, in the active and healthy occupation of an extensive Yorkshire farm-house, then through various other grades of domestic employment,—as housemaid, cook, and housekeeper—acting for a long period, in one of these capacities, in the London mansion of the Duke of Portland. Her gainings from these duties were, in all, somewhat considerable for her position in life; but which she uniformly parted with again, as her feelings, or the necessities of the case, seemed to have demanded, among her various poor or other relatives. At one time, in this way, she lent, or rather gave, the husband of her niece, Mrs. Addis, as much as £800. to assist him in a business speculation of importance, but which turned out unfortunate; and, yet, though so necessitous as she has now become herself, she is never heard to regret these acts of her former generosity.—Until the last four or five years, it had been the self-willed custom of Aunt Bess to do all the washing belonging to the small family of which she makes a part; and she can yet walk about the house, and even will go up and down stairs without the least assistance; while, invariably, she makes her own bed, nor is she ever idle, as long as there is any stocking-knitting to do, or such other domestic work as may come within the scope of her strength or ability. She thus, still, in verity, does all she can to earn her own livelihood—a condition which, at the age of a *hundred and seven*, the benevolence of the more fortunately circumstanced inhabitants of Hereford ought to be sufficient to secure her against; and in the hope that this short notice, in conjunction with the lines here accompanying, may help to such a result, by inducing a more continuous attention to the claims and story of the venerable Elizabeth Coultas, than that which was likely to be obtained on the first appearance of the verses in the columns of a newspaper, the writer has ventured on placing them thus at the conclusion of this present Hereford collection of Prose and Verse.]

Aunt Bess is agéd a hundred and seven,  
 The average years of three,  
 And yet though, in truth, an old maidén,  
 No worthier maid can be !

Year after year she liveth on,  
 And can sit on the settle still,  
 And ply her needle, knitting away,  
 With all her former skill.

Her fingers twine, though the sight be dull,  
 The worsted thread among,  
 Pointing and crossing her bright steel tools  
 From morn the whole day long !

Aunt Bess has never known wedded life—  
 The husband fond or child ;  
 And yet she has felt what it is to love,  
 And be of that dream despoil'd !

A very few words the tale will tell,  
 How her dear one wander'd far  
 Under pledge of heart to come again,  
 When rose his better star.

And in foreign climes he thought of this,  
 Of her in his own birth-land,  
 And won his way to wealth apace,  
 And then he sought her hand !

And yet, alas ! 'twas not so doom'd,  
 The ship return'd, while he  
 Was Pest-struck in that passage home,  
 And buried in the sea !

And now though eighty years, or more,  
 (Oh, what a time for thought !)  
 Our agéd Aunt hath since pass'd through,  
 Unalter'd is her lot !

She bow'd submissly to the stroke,  
 As all God's true ones should ;  
 And though the heavy tear would fall,  
 She judg'd 'twas for her good !

And still, the like content is hers ;  
 In every way 'tis seen,  
 Each act so kind—her speech so bland,  
 And her old face most serene !

Like one assur'd that her course of life  
 Has evermore been pure,  
 She feels no regrets in looking back,  
 And seems of Heaven secure !

Hereford, July 16, 1847.

## SONNET-STANZAS:

ADDRESSED TO, AND SUGGESTED BY, THE AGED

"AUNT BESS."

Gazing on thy fine face, what thoughts arise  
 Of trying character, as questioning  
 How 'tis in times when Poverty's fell sting  
 Is felt so keenly, that thy olden eyes  
 Should'st still be here, to trace the agonies  
 Of such a state, when many a hunger'd thing  
 Incessant at the milkless nipple cries,  
 And mothers moan, and sires no help can bring!  
 How 'tis that thou hast been preserv'd so long—  
 A century and seven!—and still liv'st on  
 As one who hath a "charmed life,"—such one  
 As Famine must not ever dare to wrong  
 In way we hear of now; the spirit gone  
 From the whole Empire's heart, and all to Ruin prone

Pest after Pest have on us multiplied,  
 Blighting both field and home in saddest way;  
 Poison, Death, Terror, Fever, in full sway!  
 The Irish die by thousands ' or have died,  
 And coffinless been buried, side by side,  
 Unwept, and unattended,—the dismay  
 Of the huge ill Affection so destroy'd!  
 And Scotia, England, too, feel, fear, and pray!  
 How then, I ask myself, is it, that thou  
 So aged, lone, and helpless, still should'st be  
 Sav'd through such havoc thick, so wondrously,  
 To tell thy better stories, and to bow  
 The vision back on years which none may see  
 As thou hast seen—thou Venerable Verity!

Surely, in thy young days such state was not  
 As now is? The mother's well-fill'd breast  
 'Twas thine to cling to, as a manna feast  
 Always to woo thy asking, fully fraught  
 With the pure juice the infant seeks untaught,—  
 None other like it, and of all the best!  
 And other food came next, as easy got,  
 And such as through the bone the strength increas'd!  
 And then thou hadst thy running in the fields,  
 To chase the butterfly, or cull the flower;  
 And not from day to day, through every hour,  
 To know no sight but what the dull mill yields,—  
 The pestilential presence of that power,  
 The "Factory" so called: No, this was not thy dower!

From other source thou hadst thy charm of years.  
 Thy life of sound good health, so eloquent  
 (As now I trace in thee its vast extent.)  
 Of what it is to live exempt from tears,  
 And the corroding curse of constant fears !  
 As, also, from the bitter suffering sent  
 To those, the wed, where hope no longer cheers,  
 But all is rags and cry for nourishment !  
 And yet thou'rt here, the shamer of these times,  
 This latter age of cankering turmoil ;  
 When the Work-drudge so seldom's seen to smile,  
 Or, if he does, 'tis mostly in his crimes,  
 As pilferer or pander ; thou, the while,  
 In marvel at these "glories" of our British soil !

Alas ! that thoughts like these should pain the heart,  
 Thus wak'd by thee, thou "light of other days ;"  
 Shewing what little cause we have of praise  
 In all the modern triumphs of our art ;  
 Those fire-cours'd jointures, knitting part to part,  
 Through all our wave-girt land ; the magic blaze  
 That nightly cheers our street-walks, and the start  
 Of ships to sea, which for no fair wind stays !  
 All this, and thousand wonders more are wrought,  
 And yet the greater good doth not advance  
 In equal way ; the far more priceless chance  
 That waits on human life in all its diverse lot,  
 Hale health, pure thoughts, and soul-form'd alliance.  
 Oh, sage-hair'd woman ! try, and break this evil trance !

To thee the work seems left : our chiefest quail  
 To think but on't ; the wisest in the land  
 Have for this "mystery" no "cunning" hand,  
 In every trial always seen to fail.  
 Temples to Moonshine everywhere assail  
 The wandering gaze ; the seeming in command,  
 But still the true—a mocking ! constant ail  
 The millions' doom, and Right out-brav'd and bann'd !  
 I speak, and lo ! thou shak'st thy age-wreath'd head,  
 But sayest nought, as hopeless in thy aid :  
 Not thine the Ruler's spirit-gnawing trade,  
 Craz'd schemes, spoil'd sleep, and fret of envy bred.  
 Sufficiency, and quiet smiling in the shade,  
 These were thy boon from God, and so a long life made !

Yet, as it's been with thee, why not with all ?  
 Or in the great'st degree ? The statesman's skill  
 Exemplified by thee, better ends fulfil,  
 And gather honey where now comes but gall ?  
 And though so doing, difficult we call,  
 There's nought more easy, if there be the will,—  
 As on the loveliest objects shadows fall,  
 But bring the light, and all is beauty still !

As long as Health and Goodness, Truth and Love,  
 Exist in one, why not exist in ten !  
 In ten,—a hundred,—thousand,—thousands,—then  
 To millions, and still on, till all must move ;  
 As in those force made water-eddies, when  
 Curve works on curve ; or snake out-windeth from its den.

The large creates the larger ; might new might,  
 Nor not alone in body, but in mind ;  
 While to the feelings the same rule's assign'd ;  
 In morals, also, right begetteth right.  
 Erect the standard of the requisite,  
 In way intended for the good thou'dst find,  
 And as the rod commands the lightning's flight,  
 The like results are found with human kind.  
 This is the greater law, from Nature drawn,  
 Howe'er some casual aberrations seem,  
 So seeming, but because our reason's beam  
 Can't trace the adverse causes in their dawn.  
 Take Hope, ye, then, who loveth in th' extreme,  
 Of happier time to come—or certain of it deem.

Lo ! here, in thee, is hoary honesty,  
 The placid temper, and the brow serene ;  
 Enthron'd in thine own halo, like a queen,—  
 As noble as a queen of earth can be !  
 I greet thy presence, pleased, though solemnly ;  
 And in the sober light in which thou'rt seen,  
 Yield the meek homage of the bended knee,  
 Alike to what thou art, and what thou'st been !  
 And thus it still shall be, my good "Aunt Bess,"  
 The while thy residue of life remains,  
 And stinted still as are thy daily gains ;  
 Whoever knows thee, must thy claims confess ;  
 Free as a babe's thy years from soiling stains ;  
 And thou in all most worthy of the Poet's strains !  
 Hereford, July 28th, 1847.

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